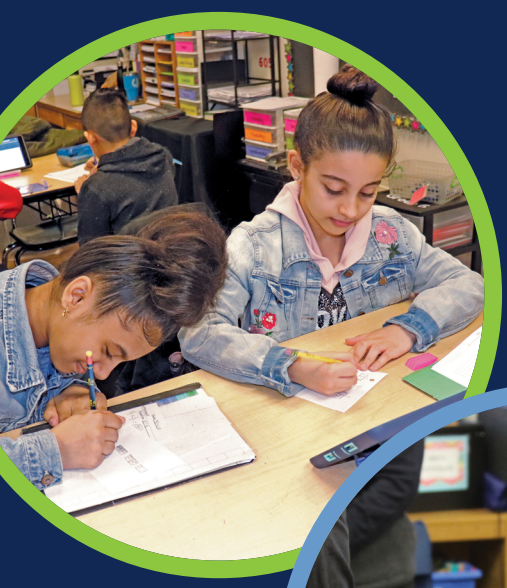


Family Guide to Special Education Services

FOR SCHOOL-AGE CHILDREN







NYC Public Schools



Overview

What is this guide?

The *Family Guide to Special Education Services for School-Age Children* was created to provide you with information about how the New York City Department of Education (DOE) determines if a student ages 5 to 21 is eligible for special education services and how the DOE provides special education services. If you are interested in learning about preschool special education services for children ages 3 to 5 with disabilities, refer to the *Family Guide to Preschool Special Education Services*.

Whether your child attends a DOE school, charter school, a private or parochial school, or an approved home schooling program, this guide provides information on the special education process.

What is Special Education?

Special Education includes services, programs, and specially designed instruction to meet the individual needs of a student with a disability. Students with disabilities who require special education services have Individualized Education Programs (IEPs). The IEP is created by a team that includes you, the parent. It will contain information about your child's interests, strengths, needs, and goals. It is a map that lays out the special education instruction, supports, and services your child needs to make progress and succeed in school. The IEP is a legal document that describes how the DOE will provide your child with a **Free Appropriate Public Education (FAPE)** in the **Least Restrictive Environment (LRE)** appropriate to meet your child's needs. LRE means that your child will be in schools and classrooms with peers without disabilities for as much of the day as possible.

If you have placed your child in a private or religious school at your expense, your child is considered a **parentally placed student**. Parentally placed students who require special education services will receive **Individualized Education Services Plans (IESPs)** for services only.

How do I use this guide?

This guide provides detailed information about the special education process. It will tell you:

- What to do if you believe your child may need special education services **SECTION 1**;
- How to make a referral for an initial evaluation **SECTION 2**;
- How to participate in the evaluation and IEP development process **SECTIONS 2** and **3**;
- How the DOE will arrange services for your child if your child is eligible **SECTION 4**;
- What special education supports and services your child might receive **SECTION 4**;
- What to do if you do not agree with the programs and/or services recommended for your child **SECTION 5**;
- What your child must do to graduate from high school **SECTION 6**;
- How you can help your child's plan to transition to college, technical school, employment, and/or independent living **SECTION 7**; and
- What resources are available to support you and your child **SECTION 8**.

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At-A-Glance

You know your child best. Your ideas, opinions and input are very important in mapping out the best possible education for your child. Every child with a disability has the right to what is called a **Free Appropriate Public Education (FAPE)**. This guide is designed to help you work with your child's school staff to develop the most appropriate program to help your child succeed.



section 1 Does My Child Need Special Education Services?

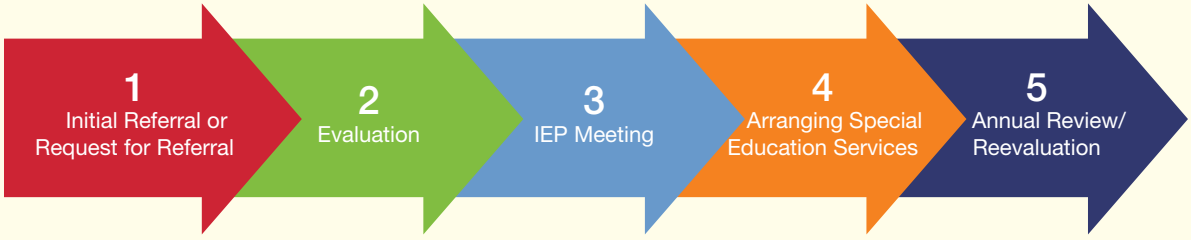
Ask Questions from the Start | *see page 1*

If you believe your child requires special education services, it is helpful to ask the right questions. Here are some questions you might want to ask your child's teacher:

- What are my child's strengths and challenges in the classroom?
- How do you support my child when they need help?
- Do you have examples of my child's work that we can look at together?
- Is my child learning and developing at a rate that is expected for their age?
- How does my child get along with other students in the classroom?
- Are there programs in the community that might help my child?
- What are some learning activities I can do at home or in the neighborhood?
- What are some questions I can ask my child when we read together?
- How can I help my child if they are struggling with homework?

section 2 Starting the Special Education Process

The Steps of the Special Education Process*



Step 1: Initial Referral or Request for Referral | *see page 3*

The first step is determining if your child has a disability and requires special education services. You or a school official may start the process with an **initial referral**, or another individual may make a **request for referral**.

Once an initial referral has been made, you will be invited to a social history meeting. A school social worker will explain the special education process and will request your written consent to evaluate your child.

Step 2: Evaluation | *see page 5*

Once you give consent, your child will be evaluated to determine their developmental history and behavior, what they know and how they learn, and their skills, abilities and areas of need. The DOE will conduct assessments in all areas related to the suspected disability.

If your child's home language is not English, the evaluation can be conducted bilingually.

Step 3: IEP Meeting | *see page 7*

After the evaluation is complete, you will attend the IEP meeting to discuss the assessments and determine if your child is eligible for special education services. If your child is eligible, the IEP team—of which you are an important member—will create an **Individualized Education Program (IEP)**. If your child is attending a private or religious school and is eligible for special education services, the team will create an **Individualized Educational Services Plan (IESP)**. For more information about IESPs, see page 17.

* At any point during this process, it may be determined that your child is not eligible or does not require special education services. (See Eligibility on page 9 for more information.)

Your Role at the IEP Meeting | *see page 12*
You will attend this meeting with teachers and other professionals who know your child, have participated in the evaluations, and/or will be providing services to your child. *See page 13 for more information about the members of the IEP team*.

You are a legally mandated member of the IEP team and your input is valuable. At the IEP meeting, you should:

- Offer insight into how your child learns and what their interests are;
- Share things about your child that only a parent could know;
- Listen to what other team members think your child needs to work on at school and share suggestions;
- Report on whether the skills your child is learning at school are being used at home;
- Ask questions of all team members.

Step 4: Arranging Special Education Services | *see page 35*
After the initial IEP is created, the DOE will ask for your written consent to provide special education services. After receiving your consent, the DOE will arrange the programs and services listed on your child's IEP.

Step 5: Annual Review/Reevaluation | *see page 7*
Your child's IEP team will meet at least once each year to review your child's progress. This is called an **annual review**. A **reevaluation** must be completed once every three years, unless you and the DOE agree in writing that it is not necessary. This is a **Mandated Three-Year Reevaluation**. You or school staff can also request a reevaluation, but it will not take place more than one time a year unless you and the DOE agree otherwise in writing.

section 3 Individualized Education Program (IEP) Meeting

Determining Eligibility | *see page 9*
The IEP team will decide if your child is eligible for special education services based on the criteria for one or more of these **disability classifications**:

- Autism
- Learning Disability
- Other Health Impairment
- Deafness
- Intellectual Disability
- Speech or Language Impairment
- Deaf-Blindness
- Multiple Disabilities
- Traumatic Brain Injury
- Emotional Disability
- Orthopedic Impairment
- Visual Impairment
- Hearing Impairment

What Is an IEP? | *see page 17*
The IEP is a written statement of the plan to provide special education services to meet your child's unique needs. It has specific information about your child and the education program designed to meet these needs, including:

- Your child's current performance in school and annual goals;
- Special education programs and services including related services;
- Participation in state and district wide tests, testing accommodations and diploma objectives;

- Date services will begin, how often they will be provided, where they will be provided and for how long;
- Means of measuring your child's progress;
- Goals for life after high school and activities to support this transition.

section 4 The IEP

What to Expect: School-Age Special Education Services | *see page 20*

The IEP team, of which you are a member, will consider how to support your child so that they can be educated with children who do not have disabilities, as much as is appropriate. This is called your child's ***Least Restrictive Environment (LRE)***.

This section outlines the programs and services available to support your child in their least restrictive environment. Here is a list of programs and services that the IEP team may consider for your child:

- Related Services
- Special Education Teacher Support Services (SETSS)
- Integrated Co-Teaching Services
- Special Class Services
- District 75 Specialized Programs
- Day and Residential Placement
- Home and Hospital Instruction

section 5 After the IEP is Developed: Arranging Services

Arranging Services | *see page 35*

Before the end of the IEP meeting, the IEP team will provide you with a printed copy of the Recommended Special Education Programs and Services page of the draft IEP. You should receive a copy of the finalized version of the IEP within two weeks of the meeting. When the DOE arranges services, every effort will be made for your child to remain in their current school.

Providing Consent | *see page 36*

If your child has never received special education services, we will ask you for written permission to start services. You will be asked to indicate your consent for special education services at the bottom of the Prior Written Notice and return it to the address listed. If you do not consent, your child will remain in general education without the recommended services.

You may withdraw your consent for all mandated IEP special education services, *in writing*, at any time, but you cannot withdraw consent for a portion of special education and related services.

Placement Timelines | *see page 37*

If this is the first time your child has been evaluated, your child will receive a placement within 60 school days from the date that you provided consent to evaluate your child. If your child is already receiving special education services, your child will receive a placement within 60 school days from the date of the referral for a reevaluation.

section 6 Graduation for Students with IEPs

Graduation from High School | *see page 39*

High school graduation marks an important completion stage in the development of a young adult. Preparing for high school graduation requires students and parents to know the requirements and take the necessary steps to support students in achieving their goals. New York State provides students with the following options:

- Advanced Regents Diploma
- Regents Diploma
- Local Diploma
- Non-Diploma Commencement Credentials

This section contains an overview about diploma requirements. For the most up to date information on graduation requirements, and other valuable resources in planning your child's middle and high school path, please visit: https://www.schools.nyc.gov/school-life/rules-for-students/graduation-requirements

section 7 Life After High School

Transition Planning | *see page 43*

Transition planning is the process used to make sure that students with IEPs are prepared for life after high school. As a parent, your participation in transition planning is important to your child's success. You will work with staff at your child's school to create a transition plan that reflects your child's goals, desires, and abilities.

Overview of Requirements for Transition Services | *see page 44*

Transition Services are a coordinated set of activities that will assist your child in moving from school to life after high school, starting when your child is 14 years old. These activities must be individualized for your child and will take into account their strengths, preferences and interests.

Transition planning and services is a process that continues throughout your child's school experience, culminating with a Student Exit Summary. A Student Exit Summary provides a meaningful picture of your child's strengths, abilities, needs and limitations and will assist your child in establishing eligibility for reasonable accommodations and supports in postsecondary education, the workplace and the community.

section 8 Getting Support

Parent Rights | *see page 50*

Your child has the right to a Free Appropriate Public Education (FAPE), and you have the right as a parent to be involved in and fully understand the process. You have the right to challenge decisions made by the school regarding your child's education and the right to request Mediation or an Impartial Hearing to resolve differences, and to appeal the decision of the Impartial Hearing.

Resolving Concerns | *see page 51*

If you need help or have questions about your child's special education programs and services, there are many steps that you can take to find a solution. For more information, see page 51.

section 1

Does My Child Need Special Education Services?

You know your child best. Because of this, your input is very important in mapping out your child's education. Staff members at your child's school are ready to work with you to ensure your child receives the services and supports they need to succeed.

Children learn at different speeds and in different ways. Some children have physical and/or intellectual disabilities. Some are challenged in just one area, while others have multiple disabilities. All children with disabilities have the right to a Free and Appropriate Public Education **(FAPE)** and to be educated alongside their peers without disabilities to the greatest extent possible.

If your child has a disability, the New York City DOE will provide special education supports and services specially designed to meet their individual needs, at no cost to you.

If you believe that your child may require special education services, it is important that you talk to your child's current teacher(s). They can share information about how your child is doing in school, and you can share information about how your child is doing at home. Talk to your child's teacher to determine what supports can be provided in your child's current class. It may be possible to adapt your child's general education program without special education services.

Ask Questions from the Start

Questions to Ask:

- What are my child's strengths and challenges in the classroom?
- How do you support my child when they need help?
- Do you have examples of my child's work that we can look at together?
- Is my child learning and developing at a rate that is expected for their age?
- How does my child get along with other students in the classroom?
- Are there programs in the community that might help my child?
- What are some learning activities I can do at home or in the neighborhood?
- What are some questions I can ask my child when we read together?
- How can I help my child if they are struggling with homework?

Information to Share:

- What brings out the best in your child?
- What are your child's strengths, challenges, and interests?
- What does your child like to do outside of school?
- What do you do at home to encourage positive behavior and learning?
- What areas does your child need extra help with?

It may be possible to adapt your child's general education program without special education services.

Response to Intervention

Speak with your child's teacher(s) to find out if there are supports available within your child's current class or school. These supports might be all that your child needs. It may be possible to adapt your child's general education program without special education services.

Response to Intervention (RtI) is an approach schools use to match individual students with the teaching practices and level of support that work best for them. While you may make a referral for a special education evaluation at any time, public schools will implement RtI before making a referral.

How it Works:

RtI is a three-tiered model. At each step, more support is offered to students who need it.

- **Tier 1:** For all students. This is high quality, differentiated instruction provided in a general education classroom.
- **Tier 2:** For some students. This may include small group instruction and/or additional instructional time.
- **Tier 3:** For a smaller number of students. This includes more intensive instruction and materials or programs to target your child's needs.

Teachers using RtI will:

- Assess your child's skills and/or behaviors.
- Determine if your child needs more support than the instruction provided in general education to all students.
- Provide interventions as needed.
- Monitor your child's progress to determine if the intervention is working and, if not, adjust the intervention as needed.

You will be informed if your child is receiving Tier 2 or Tier 3 support or interventions, and your child's school will make progress monitoring information available. To learn more about RtI, ask your school for additional information or visit NYSED—A Parent's Guide to Response to Intervention at http://www.p12.nysed.gov/specialed/RTI/parent.htm. You can learn more about behavioral supports at https://www.schools.nyc.gov/special-education/supports-and-services/behavior-supports.

What's Next? Does Your Child Need Additional Supports?

If you have talked with your child's teacher(s) and other staff at the school, you may still feel that your child needs additional support. If you continue to suspect that your child may have a disability, you or DOE staff can make a referral for an evaluation for special education services. The evaluation is a series of assessments to determine if your child is eligible for special education services. You can make a referral for a special education evaluation at any time. For more information about making a referral, see Section 2: Starting the Special Education Process.

section 2

Starting the Special Education Process

The Initial Referral Process

The first step in determining if your child has a disability and requires special education services is to make a referral for an initial evaluation, also known as an **Initial Referral**. The initial referral *must be in writing*. The referral may be made by you, the principal of your DOE school, or the Committee on Special Education (CSE) Chairperson. If you are making a referral, you should:

- Describe your concerns about your child's development, learning, and/or behavior
- State that you are requesting a special education evaluation



- List any services your child has received or is currently receiving
- Include your child's full legal name and date of birth
- Include your name, address, and telephone number
- State your preferred language (if it is not English)

Where do you send the referral?

Students in Public School

Mail, fax, email, or give the written referral to the principal or another staff member in the school.

Students enrolled in private, religious, or charter schools, or students not enrolled in school

Mail, fax, or give the referral letter to your local CSE. See *Important Contacts and Resources* in Section 8: Getting Support for CSE contact information.

Other than the parent/guardian, who else can make an initial referral?

The principal of the DOE school your child attends can make an initial referral. If your child is not enrolled in school or attends a charter or non-public/private school, the CSE chairperson can make an initial referral. See the *Important Contacts and Resources* section for information about how to find your CSE.

Can a teacher or health care provider make an initial referral?

Teachers and licensed physicians can **request** that the DOE refer a student for an initial evaluation. Some other individuals may make a Request for Initial Referral, including:

- **A professional staff member** of the school your child attends or is eligible to attend;
- **A judicial officer**;
- **A professional staff member** of a public agency with responsibility for welfare, health, or education of the child;
- **A student** who is 18 years of age or older, or an emancipated minor.

When one of these individuals suspects that a student may require special education services, they can submit a request for an initial referral to the principal or the CSE Chairperson.

Within 10 school days of receiving the request, the principal or CSE Chairperson will either:

- Start the referral process (see below); or
- Give you a copy of the request for referral, inform you that you may refer your child yourself, and offer to meet with you to discuss what other strategies might be appropriate to meet your child's needs (such as RtI). You will also receive a **Notice of Request for Initial Referral,** which details this process.

After the Referral Has Been Made

You will be sent a **Notice of Referral Letter**, a copy of the **Procedural Safeguards Notice**, and the **Notice of Social History Meeting**. These materials:

- Explain your rights;
- Provide the name and telephone number of a person to call if you have any questions; and
- Ask you to meet with the school social worker for a **social history meeting**. During that meeting, all of your rights will be explained to you in your preferred language or mode of communication. At your request, the meeting will include an interpreter.

Consent and the Right to Confidentiality

During your **Social History Meeting**, you will be given information about the initial evaluation process, and then asked to sign a **Consent for Initial Evaluation** form. You must consent to the evaluation for your child to be considered for special education services. If you choose *not* to sign the consent for the initial evaluation, your child *will not* be evaluated.

You will be asked to authorize the release of health information and other records to the DOE. This will allow the IEP team to get reports from outside agencies or medical reports from physicians that may be important to your child's evaluation. While you are not required to sign this release form, it is encouraged because these records may help the IEP team better understand your child's needs. If you authorize the release of these records, the DOE will maintain them securely and confidentially.

Your child's special education records—including IEPs and assessment reports—are confidential documents. They are securely maintained in the DOE's electronic data system.

The Initial Evaluation

After you provide your written consent, the DOE has 60 calendar days to complete an initial evaluation of your child. The DOE will evaluate your child in all areas related to the suspected disability. These assessments measure your child's skills, abilities, and areas of need. The initial evaluation will include:

- A **social history interview** with you to get information about your child's development and family history;
- A **psychoeducational assessment** that looks at what your child knows and how they learn;
- An **observation** of your child in their current classroom;
- For students 12 and older, a **vocational assessment** that includes a review of school records, teacher assessments, and parent and student interviews to determine vocational skills and interest; and
- A recent **physical examination** of your child. If you have trouble obtaining one, the school or CSE will help you get one, at no cost to you.

The IEP team may conduct other assessments to explore all areas related to your child's suspected disability. These assessments might include speech and language, functional behavior, or assistive technology, for example.

Bilingual Evaluations

Children may be evaluated both in their home language and English if their home language is not English. This is called a **bilingual evaluation.** If this is your child's first evaluation, the initial evaluation will be done:

- in both your child's home language and English, to the extent possible; and,
- using input from you, teachers, bilingual clinicians, and others that includes information about your child's skills and rate of language development in both languages.



Your child may be evaluated bilingually based on:

- The language used at home, as indicated on the Home Language Identification Survey; and,
- Results of the New York State Identification Test for English Language Learners (NYSITELL), or the New York State English as a Second Language Achievement Test (NYSESLAT), if applicable.

Independent Assessments

An independent assessment is done by a qualified examiner who does not work for the DOE. Although the DOE will complete any necessary assessments, you also have the right to provide the IEP team with private evaluations.

Independent Assessments Paid for by You

While the DOE will evaluate your child free of cost, you also have the right to provide the IEP team with private assessments completed at your own expense. If your child is eligible for Medicaid, these assessments may be covered by Medicaid. Speak with your child's Medicaid provider to determine if these assessments are covered. If you want the DOE to consider independent assessments, you should provide them to the IEP team in advance of the IEP meeting.

Independent Assessments Paid for by the DOE

If you disagree with the DOE's evaluation and would like the DOE to pay for an independent assessment, you must notify the school or CSE *in writing*. The DOE may either agree to pay for an independent assessment or begin an impartial hearing to show that the DOE's evaluation was appropriate.

If the DOE agrees to pay for the independent assessment, you must:

- Choose a qualified evaluator;
- Ask for reimbursement within a reasonable period of time; and
- Provide the DOE with the results of the assessment.

If an Impartial Hearing Officer finds that the assessment completed by the DOE is appropriate, you still have the right to get and share a private evaluation with the IEP team, but the DOE will not pay for it.

Timelines for Evaluations

The DOE has **60 calendar days** to evaluate your child. This timeline starts on the date you provide consent (for the **initial evaluation**) or the day of the referral (for a **reevaluation**). If you unreasonably delay the evaluation process, the timeline may be adjusted.

If assessments are not completed within 60 calendar days and you did not delay the process, you will get an **Assessment Authorization Letter**. The letter explains how you can select a licensed non-DOE evaluator at no cost to you. It includes a list of names, addresses and telephone numbers of public and private agencies and professionals from which you may get the assessment.

section 3

The IEP Meeting

After the Evaluation

Once your child's evaluation is completed, you will be invited to an IEP meeting. At the meeting, the IEP team—of which you are an important member—will review information from the evaluation and other sources to determine whether your child is eligible for special education services. If your child is eligible, the team will work together at the meeting to develop an IEP.

You will get a written invitation at least five days before the meeting. It will be in your preferred language, if it is a **covered language** as defined by the DOE.[1] At your request, an interpreter will be available for the IEP meeting in your preferred language. Staff from your child's school or the CSE may contact you by telephone to confirm that you will attend.

If you cannot attend the IEP meeting, *you must contact the school or CSE* and ask to change the date. It is very important that you attend IEP meetings so that you can participate in decisions about your child's special education services and programs. Your observations and opinions are valuable and must be considered at the meeting.

All assessments, records, and reports from the evaluation will be mailed to you at least 5 days before the IEP meeting. This will give you a chance to discuss or review the documents before the IEP meeting. If you need assistance, including interpretation or translation, to understand your child's assessments and IEP, let the IEP team know. At your request, the IEP and assessments will be translated.

If your child attends a public school, the meeting will take place at your child's school. If your child is enrolled in religious, private, or charter school, or not enrolled in school, the meeting will be held at the CSE office, or at your child's school, if possible.

Types of IEP Meetings

Initial IEP Meeting

There will be an **Initial IEP meeting** after your child's Initial Evaluation. At this meeting, the team will review the initial evaluation and any other appropriate materials and will determine if your child is eligible for special education services. If your child is eligible, the IEP team will develop an IEP.

Annual Review

Once your child is receiving special education services, an IEP meeting is

1 "Covered Languages" refers to any of the most common languages other than English used by the DOE students and their families. Currently, the DOE has nine covered languages: Arabic, Bengali, Chinese, French, Haitian Creole, Korean, Russian, Spanish, and Urdu. Together with English, these are the primary languages used by 95% of DOE students and their families.



held each year to review their progress. This is called an **Annual Review**.

During the annual review, the IEP team will:

- Discuss your child's progress toward their goals
- Review the special education services provided
- Determine services and goals for the following year

Requested Review

At any time, if you have concerns about your child's current program or services, you may request an IEP meeting in writing to your school or CSE. This is a **requested review**. During this meeting, the IEP team will review your child's current program and services and address any areas of need.

Reevaluation

Additionally, your child may be referred for what is called a **Reevaluation**. With your input, the IEP team will review current data about your child and determine if new assessments should be completed.

You can request a reevaluation if you believe that your child's program or related services need to be reassessed. To request a reevaluation, write to your child's school or CSE. School staff may also request a reevaluation if your child's educational or related service needs warrant a reevaluation. A reevaluation will not be completed more than one time in a year unless you and the DOE agree otherwise in writing.

In addition, a reevaluation *must* be completed once every three years, unless you and the DOE agree *in writing* that it is

not necessary. This is called a **Mandated Three-Year Reevaluation.**

If the school or CSE determines that new assessments are needed as part of a reevaluation, you will be asked to provide your consent to the evaluation. Consent to evaluation means you are giving your permission to complete an evaluation to determine continued eligibility for special education services. If the DOE does not get a response from you, DOE staff may proceed with the reevaluation after documented attempts to contact you.

If you refuse to agree to the evaluation, the CSE or school principal may request **mediation** or an **impartial hearing** to obtain the authority to conduct the evaluation. This may impact your child's ability to obtain services.

Once the evaluation is completed, the written assessment reports will be shared with you, and an IEP meeting will be scheduled. The reports include your child's strengths and challenges, and the supports they may need in school.

Eligibility

The IEP team will determine if your child is eligible for special education services and requires an IEP. Your child will be eligible if:

- They meet the criteria for one or more of the disability classifications *(see below)*; and
- The disability affects your child's performance in school and/or ability to benefit from the general education curriculum.

Eligibility is *not* based on:

- A lack of appropriate instruction in reading; or
- A lack of appropriate instruction in math; or
- Limited English proficiency.

If the IEP team determines that your child has a disability and that special education services are necessary, it will develop an IEP. The IEP will outline the special education services and/or programs your child will receive and the goals your child will work toward over the course of the year. The special education programs and services that may be recommended are described in Section 4: The Individualized Education Program (IEP).

If the IEP team does not find that your child meets the criteria for one or more of the disability classifications, they are not eligible for special education services. Instead, information from the evaluation will be given to the principal of your child's school. The principal will work with staff to help your child. In this case, an IEP will not be developed and you will receive a letter explaining why your child was found not to be eligible for special education services. If you disagree with these results, you have the right to challenge. For more information about your rights, see Section 8: Getting Support.

Disability Classifications

Your child must be eligible for one of the 13 disability classifications[2] in order to be eligible for special education services.

2 The 13 disability classifications are defined by the New York State Education Department's Regulations of the Commissioner of Education: Part 200. It can be found at http://www.p12.nysed.gov/specialed/lawsregs/documents/regulations-part-200-201-oct-2016.pdf

Below is a list and description of the disability classifications:

- Autism
- Deafness
- Deaf-Blindness
- Emotional Disability
- Hearing Impairment
- Intellectual Disability
- Learning Disability
- Multiple Disabilities
- Orthopedic Impairment
- Other Health Impairment
- Speech or Language Impairment
- Traumatic Brain Injury
- Visual Impairment

Autism

A student with a developmental disability that has significant impact on their communication skills, social interactions, and academic performance. It is generally evident before age 3. Other characteristics connected with autism are:

- Engagement in repetitive activities and stereotyped movements
- Resistance to environmental change or change in daily routines
- Unusual responses to sensory experiences

Deafness

A student with a hearing impairment that is so severe that the student is unable to process language through hearing, with or without amplification, such that it affects the student's academic performance.

Deaf-Blindness

A student with both hearing and visual impairment. The student's communication, developmental, and educational needs are so great that special education programs only for students with deafness or students with blindness cannot meet them.

Emotional Disability

A student who shows one or more of the following characteristics over a long period of time and to a marked degree that negatively affects the student's academic performance:

- An inability to learn that cannot be explained by intellectual, sensory or health factors
- An inability to build or maintain satisfactory relationships with peers and teachers
- Inappropriate types of behavior or feelings under normal circumstances
- A generally pervasive mood of unhappiness or depression
- A tendency to develop physical symptoms or fears associated with personal or school problems

Hearing Impairment

A student with hearing loss not included under the definition of deafness that negatively affects their academic performance. This type of hearing loss can be permanent or varying.

Intellectual Disability

A student with significantly below-average intellectual ability and deficits in adaptive behavior that negatively affect their academic performance. Adaptive behavior refers to age-appropriate behavior that people need to live independently and function well in daily life.

Learning Disability

A student with a disorder that affects their ability to listen, think, speak, read, write, spell or do math, and relates to understanding or use of spoken or written language. The term does not include

learning problems that are primarily the result of visual, hearing or motor disabilities; of intellectual disability; of emotional disability or of environmental, cultural or economic disadvantage. The term does include such conditions as:

- Perceptual disabilities
- Brain injury
- Minimal brain dysfunction
- Dyslexia
- Developmental aphasia

Multiple Disabilities
A student with more than one impairment, such as intellectual disability and blindness, intellectual disability and deafness, etc. This combination creates educational needs that cannot be met in a special education program solely for one of the impairments. The term does not include deaf-blindness.

Orthopedic Impairment
A student with a severe impairment to their body that adversely affects their educational performance. The term includes impairments caused by:

- Congenital anomaly (clubfoot, absence of some member, etc.)
- Disease (poliomyelitis, bone tuberculosis, etc.)
- Other causes (cerebral palsy, amputation and fractures or burns which cause contractures)

Other Health Impairment
A student with limited strength, vitality or alertness, which adversely affects their academic performance. This includes an increased alertness to environmental stimuli that affects one's ability to focus in the school environment due to chronic or acute health problems. Health problems include, but are not limited to a heart condition, tuberculosis, rheumatic fever, nephritis, asthma, sickle cell anemia, hemophilia, epilepsy, lead poisoning, leukemia, diabetes, attention deficit disorder or attention deficit hyperactivity disorder, or Tourette syndrome.

The IEP team will determine if your child is eligible for special education services and requires an IEP.

Speech or Language Impairment
A student with a communication disorder, such as stuttering, impaired articulation, a language impairment or a voice impairment that adversely affects their educational performance.

Traumatic Brain Injury
A student with a brain injury caused by some kind of physical force or by certain medical conditions such as stroke, encephalitis, aneurysm, and anoxia or brain tumors that adversely affects their academic performance. The term includes open or closed head injuries or brain injuries from certain medical conditions resulting in mild, moderate or severe impairments in one or more areas, including cognition, language, memory, attention, reasoning, abstract thinking, judgment, problem solving, sensory, perceptual and motor abilities, psycho-social behavior, physical functions, information processing and speech. The term does not include injuries that are present from birth or caused by birth trauma.

Visual Impairment
A student with an impairment in vision including blindness that, even with correction, adversely affects their educational performance. The term includes both partial sight and blindness.

Preparing for the IEP Meeting

At an IEP meeting, each team member brings important information to share. They work together to determine whether your child has a disability and discuss which special education services are appropriate. *As the parent, you are required to be invited to every IEP meeting, and your input is extremely important.*

We encourage you to:

- Communicate with DOE staff about the date and time for the IEP meeting, so that it can be convenient for you.
- Gather information that may be helpful in explaining your child's needs. This information may come from people who know your child, such as teachers, providers or doctors.
- Review the evaluation results. Take notes on results that you think are important and results that you have questions about.
- Provide the IEP team with any independent assessments you want them to consider, and tell the IEP team about any issues you would like them to consider. To ensure the IEP team is able to best consider these assessments at the IEP meeting, you should provide them as far in advance of the IEP meeting as possible.
- Be prepared to discuss your child's strengths and needs, and how they affect their academic, social, emotional, and physical development.
- Consider whether you want to invite other people to the meeting who know your child and can help make decisions, such as a doctor, childcare provider, relative, or advocate.
- If you want a Certified Parent Member to attend, make your request in writing at least 72 hours before the meeting (see below for explanation of Certified Parent Member).
- If English is not your preferred language, make a request for an interpreter in writing at least 72 hours before the meeting. If you would like copies of the assessments or the IEP in a language other than English, make a request in writing.

At an IEP meeting conducted for an annual review or following a reevaluation, if you would like the IEP team to consider changing the special education program or services, we encourage you to tell DOE staff in advance of the IEP meeting.

At an IEP meeting, each team member brings important information to share.

IEP Team Members

Parent/Guardian

You will be invited to participate in every IEP meeting. As the parent, you know your child best, so you can speak about your child's strengths and needs, and share your thoughts on what will help your child the most.

As a member of the IEP team, you should:

- Offer observations about how your child learns
- Share information about your child's strengths, needs, interests, and other things about your child that the school may not know
- Listen to what the other team members think your child needs to work on at school and share your suggestions
- Talk about how your child uses (or does not use) the skills they learn in school at home
- Ask questions of all team members and speak up if you don't understand something
- Work with the rest of the team to develop the IEP

At the IEP meeting, you will be asked to sign the IEP attendance page. Signing the attendance page does *not* mean that you agree with the contents of the IEP. Instead, it is proof that you attended the meeting. If you were unable to attend the meeting, a copy of the IEP will be sent to your home.

The District Representative

The district representative leads the IEP meeting and facilitates discussion about student eligibility and the development of the IEP. They will ensure that you are a meaningful participant and will encourage you to raise concerns you may have



about your child's education. Additionally, the district representative will:

- Provide information regarding the continuum of services (special education programs and supports) that are available in your child's school and in other schools in the district
- Ensure that the team considers all potentially appropriate programs and service options, including those that you have suggested
- Explain that children with disabilities must be educated with children without disabilities as much as is appropriate
- Ensure that the team considers whether your child can achieve in and benefit from the general education environment before recommending other programs

The district representative usually serves in two roles. For your child's initial IEP meeting, the district representative is often the school social worker or school psychologist. For your child's annual review IEP meetings, the district representative is often your child's special education teacher or a related services provider.

Teachers

Teachers are important participants in the IEP meeting. If your child is or may be participating in the general education environment, at least one general education teacher must attend.

General Education Teacher

These teachers will provide information about your child's performance in the general education curriculum. Specifically, they will:

- Describe the general education curriculum and environment
- Help to determine appropriate intervention strategies, supplementary aids and services, program modifications, curriculum accommodations, other individualized supports, or other changes to the general education program that will help your child learn and achieve
- Discuss supports that are necessary for the school staff so your child can be instructed in the general education curriculum



Special Education Teacher and/or Related Service Provider

These members bring valuable experience about how to educate children with disabilities. Because of their training in special education, they will:

- Review and interpret assessment materials and/or provider reports
- (If your child is already receiving special education services) Discuss your child's present level of educational performance, including progress toward IEP goals, and describe your child's learning style, behavior, and attendance
- Make recommendations about the supports and services that will allow your child to succeed in their least restrictive environment
- Explain how to adapt the general education curriculum to help your child learn

Psychologist/School Social Worker

The attendance of the school psychologist is not always required. If your child's IEP meeting is for an **initial evaluation** (first-time services) or **reevaluation** (students who already have services) the school psychologist **must** be present. A school psychologist will be present whenever a new evaluation is reviewed, or when a change to a student's special education services involves a more intensive staff-to-student ratio. Similarly, the school social worker may be in attendance, depending on whether they are involved in the evaluation process.

When school psychologists and/or school social workers are IEP team members, they will share important information with the team obtained through evaluations/observations. Their

The IEP team can also include individuals with special knowledge about your child and/or their disability.

expertise is crucial to the process, so you should ask them questions about anything that you do not understand.

Additional Members

The IEP team can also include individuals with special knowledge about your child and/or their disability. You may invite an outside expert who has worked with your child professionally, or others who can talk about your child's strengths and/or needs. The DOE might also invite other individuals who know your child well, such as a paraprofessional.

Certified Parent Member

You have the right to request a parent member attend the IEP meeting. A parent member is a parent of a child who lives in New York City who has had an IEP within the last five school years. Parent members can assist parents in understanding the IEP process and support your participation and contributions to the IEP meeting. If you would like a parent member to participate in your child's IEP meeting, make a written request to your child's school or CSE at least 72 hours in advance of the IEP meeting.

IEP Team Member Excusal

A required IEP team member may be excused from attending an IEP meeting, but only if it is *not* an initial IEP meeting. An IEP team will *not* routinely or unilaterally excuse required IEP team members. When a required IEP team member is not available, you and the IEP team should determine whether it makes sense to hold an IEP meeting without that team member or whether it would be better to reschedule the meeting.

The IEP team member will *not* be excused without your agreement. Your agreement to excuse a required IEP team member will be requested **at least 5 calendar days before the IEP meeting**. If you agree to the member excusal, you should sign and return the form. If you do not agree, that member will not be excused from the meeting.

A required IEP team member may be excused even if the member's area of the curriculum or related services will be discussed. In this case, that IEP team member will send you a summary of the information that they would have covered in the IEP meeting. You should receive the summary **at least 5 calendar days before the IEP meeting.** Please review this summary when considering whether to agree to excuse the IEP team member.

The Members of the IEP Team:

- **You, the parent(s)** or persons in a parental relationship with your child.
- **One of your child's general education teachers** whenever your child is or *may* be participating in the general education environment.
- **A special education teacher and/or related services provider.** For initial referrals, one of the school's special education teachers serves as the special education representative on the team. If a child is already receiving special education services, one of your child's special education teachers will participate. If your child receives only related services (e.g., speech therapy), your child's related service provider may serve in this role.
- **A school psychologist** whenever there was an initial evaluation or reevaluation, whenever a psychological assessment is reviewed, and whenever certain program or service recommendation changes are considered. A school psychologist will also participate in the IEP meeting upon your request.
- **A school social worker** if they were involved in the evaluation process.
- **An individual who can interpret the instructional implications** of evaluation results. They may be a member of the IEP team who is also fulfilling another role, such as general education teacher, special education teacher, special education provider, or school psychologist. They will talk about how the evaluation results may affect instruction.
- **A District Representative.** This individual is qualified to provide or supervise special education services, is familiar with the general education curriculum, and is knowledgeable about the availability of district resources. The District Representative may also be performing another role on the IEP team. The District Representative's role is to lead the group in developing an IEP that everyone agrees is appropriate for the child.
- **A school physician**, if specifically requested *in writing* by you at least *72 hours* prior to the meeting.
- **A Certified Parent Member**, if specifically requested *in writing* by you at least *72 hours* prior to the meeting. This is a parent of a student who has had an IEP in the last five years who resides in the school district or a neighboring school district who may attend at your request.
- **Other persons having special knowledge or expertise** about your child, such as related services personnel. You can request their presence, as can the school or the CSE.
- **Your child (the student)**, as appropriate. If your child is 14 years old or older, they will be invited to the meeting, and it may be a good choice to invite them at an even earlier age.

section 4

The Individualized Education Program (IEP)

The Individualized Education Program (IEP)

The IEP is a written statement of the plan to provide your child with a FAPE in their LRE.

Guidelines for Parentally Placed Students

If you have placed your child in a private or religious school at your expense, your child is considered a **parentally placed student**. Parentally placed students who require special education services will receive Individualized Education Services Plans (IESPs). The IESP is a written statement of the plan to provide your child with special education services. The IESP will contain information *similar* to what is described below for IEPs. An IESP may recommend services such as related services, Special Education Teacher Support Services, paraprofessionals, and transportation.

The CSE sends out a **Request for Special Education Services** form every year to parents of parentally placed students with disabilities. Parents must complete the form and return it to the appropriate CSE in order for their children to receive services in the upcoming school year. If you think you should have received this letter and did not, or if you have any questions about parentally placed students, contact your CSE.

Least Restrictive Environment (LRE)
Your child will be educated with peers without disabilities as much as is appropriate. This is referred to as your child's **least restrictive environment** (LRE). Students with IEPs who spend more time with peers without disabilities have[3]:

- Higher scores on math and reading tests;
- Fewer absences from school;
- Fewer referrals for disruptive behavior; and
- Better outcomes after high school.

IEP Overview

The IEP reflects the IEP team's conversation about your child's evaluation and educational needs. The IEP will contain the IEP team's recommendation as to the special educational program and services designed to meet your child's unique needs.

The IEP will contain:

Disability Classification—The IEP will specify which of the 13 disability

3 Wagner, M., Newman, L., Cameto, R., Levine, P., and Garza, N. (2006). An Overview of Findings From Wave 2 of the National Longitudinal Transition Study-2 (NLTS2). (NCSER 2006-3004). Menlo Park, CA: SRI International.

classifications applies to your child. For more information, see the **Disability Classifications** heading in Section 3: The IEP Meeting.

Present Levels of Performance— This section describes your child's areas of strength, abilities, weaknesses, and needs relating to their disability. This includes evaluation results, academic achievement, social development, physical development, and management needs. It also includes information about how your child's disability affects their progress in the general education curriculum. The information in this section comes from assessments and observations made by you and school staff.



Student Needs Relating to Special Factors—This section indicates whether your child needs a particular device or service to address the special factors below:

- Behavioral Issues
- Multilingual learners
- Blindness or Visual Impairment
- Deaf or Hard of Hearing
- Assistive technology

Measurable Postsecondary Goals— If your child is age 14 or older, the IEP will include goals in the areas of education or training, employment, or independent living skills. Your involvement in creating these goals is important, as they form the basis of the school's and your child's work preparing for life after school. See more about Measurable Postsecondary Goals in Section 7: Life After High School.

Measurable Annual Goals— Measurable Annual Goals are goals developed in order to meet the needs that the IEP team identifies in the Present Levels of Performance. These are specific goals that your child can reasonably accomplish in a year. These goals must be *measurable*, meaning it must be possible to determine whether your child achieved the goals. If your child is participating in **alternate assessment**, the goals must be broken down into short-term instructional objectives or benchmarks. See more about Measurable Annual Goals as they relate to your child's transition out of high school in Section 7: Life After High School.

Reporting Progress to Parents—The IEP will indicate when progress will be measured and how you will be informed of that progress.

Recommended Special Education Programs and Services—The IEP will recommend programs and services that your child will receive. See Special Education Program and Services section below for more information.

Testing Accommodations—Testing accommodations are changes to a test format or test administration. They are designed to remove barriers and increase access to tests. The IEP team will consider your child's individual needs to decide if any testing accommodations are appropriate, and if so which ones.

Coordinated Set of Transition Activities—In this section, the IEP team will plan the activities that are targeted to help your child move from school to life after school, with the goal of continued education, employment, and/or independent living. The IEP team will complete this section for students who are 14 or older, or before if appropriate. Refer to Section 7: Life After High School for more detailed information about the transition planning process. See more about the **Coordinated Set of Transition Activities** in Section 7.

Participation in State and District-wide Assessments—This section of the IEP specifies whether and how your child will participate in state and district-wide assessments.

- For students participating in standard assessments, the IEP will list what, if any, accommodations will be provided in testing.
- For students not participating in standard assessments, the IEP must state how your child's progress will be measured including with the New York State Alternate Assessment (NYSAA). Students who are participating in alternate assessments are not eligible to receive a Local or Regents diploma. Refer to Section 6: Graduation for Students with IEPs for more information about diploma requirements.

Participation with Students without Disabilities—To ensure your child is being educated in their LRE, this section of the IEP addresses the extent to which your child will participate in the general education classes and other school activities with peers without disabilities.

Promotion Criteria—This section is only applicable to students in Grades 3–8. This section will specify if your child will be held to standard or modified promotion criteria. Promotion is the process by which teachers determine if students are ready for, and have mastered the content and skills to be successful in, the next grade. Modified promotion criteria allows students to move to the next grade with requirements that are different from the typical promotion criteria. Only a very small percentage of students with IEPs will need modified promotion criteria. If your child is held to modified promotion criteria, they will need to meet the literacy and/or math annual goals on their IEP or make sufficient progress toward meeting these goals to be promoted. If modified promotion criteria are recommended, the IEP must describe that criteria and the reason why your child requires modified promotion criteria. It is important to remember that modifying promotion criteria is temporary and does not exist in high school.

Therefore, in order to prepare your child for success in high school, the DOE must ensure that the appropriate supports and services are in place to allow your child to access, participate in, and progress toward the learning standards for their grade.

Diploma Objective—The IEP must state if your child is working toward a diploma (and, if so, which) and/or a commencement credential. All students, including students with disabilities, are encouraged to work toward the highest diploma option available. Students with disabilities may earn the following diplomas and credentials from high school:

Diplomas

- Advanced Regents diploma
- Regents diploma
- Local diploma

Credentials

- Career Development and Occupational Studies (CDOS) Commencement Credentials
- Skills and Achievement Commencement Credential (SACC)

Refer to Section 6: Graduation for Students with IEPs for details about each diploma and credential option.

Special Education Programs and Services

What to Expect: School-Age Special Education Services

The IEP team, of which you are a member, will consider how to support your child so that they can be educated with children who do not have disabilities, as much as is appropriate. This is called your child's **Least Restrictive Environment (LRE)**.

The IEP team will first consider whether your child's needs can be met in a general education class with supports, aids, and services provided to your child. If so, a program in a general education setting will be recommended.

If the IEP team finds that your child cannot participate in general education class(es), even with appropriate special education services and supports, other settings will be considered. These may include special classes or special schools.

You should know that your child may participate in extracurricular and non-academic activities with children without disabilities. These activities may include physical education class, recess, and after-school activities, among others. Whenever possible, your child will attend the same school that they would attend if they did not have a disability.

The IEP team may recommend a combination of different special education services and programs. The services and programs on your child's IEP might not be the same through the entire day. Instead, the IEP will recommend the appropriate level of support for your child in each content area.

Special Education Teacher Support Services (SETSS)

Special Education Teacher Support Services (SETSS) are specially designed and/or supplemental instruction provided by a special education teacher. With SETSS, the student is supported by a special education teacher in accessing and progressing in the general education classroom alongside peers without disabilities. The SETSS teacher may provide instruction directly to the student. This is called "direct" SETSS. When

Integrated Co-Teaching (ICT) classrooms include both students with disabilities and students without disabilities.

providing direct SETSS, the SETSS teacher may:

- Adapt content being taught in your child's general education classroom, or
- Use different methods of instruction. These could include a particular method of reading instruction that is not being provided in the general education class, use of visual aids, or simplified directions, for example.

Alternatively, the special education teacher may work with your child's general education teacher(s), instead of working directly with your child. When doing so, the SETSS provider may guide the general education teacher in how to adjust your child's learning environment and/or the teacher's instructional methods. This is called "indirect" SETSS.

If SETSS is recommended, your child's IEP will indicate the:

- Classes in which SETSS will be provided
- **Frequency and duration—**The number of periods per week the services will be provided and the length of each period. This may be for as few as three hours per week or as much as 50% of the school day.
- **Type of SETSS services—**Whether those services will be provided directly with your child or indirectly with their general education teacher.
- **Location—**Whether those services will be provided in your child's classroom or a separate location, or in a combination of the two.
- **Group size—**Whether your child will be seen individually or in a group. If SETSS is recommended to be provided in a group, the maximum group size will be indicated on your child's IEP. It will not exceed eight students.

Integrated Co-Teaching (ICT)

Integrated Co-Teaching (ICT) classrooms include both students with disabilities and students without disabilities. Two teachers lead an ICT classroom: a general education teacher and a special education teacher. The teachers work together and collaborate to adapt and modify instruction to ensure the entire class has access to the general education curriculum.

In ICT classrooms, the number of students with IEPs will be 40% or less of the total class register, up to a maximum of 12 students with IEPs.

If ICT is recommended, your child's IEP will specify the specific subjects that will be served by the ICT model (e.g., mathematics, ELA, or science).

Special Class Services

Special classes are classes that serve only students with disabilities. Special classes serve children whose needs cannot be met within the general education classroom, even if special education services are provided. A student can be recommended for special class services in only some instructional areas or in all instructional areas. This recommendation will depend on the individual child's needs.

In special classes, students must be grouped by similarity of educational needs. Classes may contain students with the same disability or with different disabilities, as long as they have similar functional levels. This means the students in a special class will share similar levels of:

- Academic and learning characteristics
- Physical development
- Management needs

Special Class Staffing Intensity

There are different levels of staffing intensity in special classes. These levels are determined by students' academic and/or management needs. Staffing intensity ratios are noted on the IEP as the number of students, to the number of teachers, to the number of paraprofessionals. For example, a staffing ratio of twelve students served by one special education teacher and one paraprofessional is shown as 12:1+1.

Classroom Paraprofessionals

Some (but not all) special classes have one or more classroom paraprofessionals in them. A classroom paraprofessional may provide instructional services, physical supports, and/or behavioral supports to students under the general supervision and direction of a classroom teacher.

Depending on the type of special class program, classroom paraprofessionals may:

- Provide instruction to a student or a group of students as outlined by the classroom teacher;
- Assist students in moving from one activity to the next (e.g., within the class; at school-wide arrival and departure; moving to and from cafeteria and between classrooms);
- Support appropriate student conduct; and/or
- Provide toilet training and/or toileting assistance.

Specialized Public Schools for Students with Significant Disabilities (District 75 Schools)

District 75 is a specialized district within the DOE that provides more intensive and/or specialized types of supports to students who require them. District 75 programs are located throughout New York City. Some District 75 programs are in schools that also serve students without disabilities. Other District 75 programs are in buildings that only serve students with IEPs. There are a wide variety of settings in District 75. Keeping in line with the mandate for LRE, students can receive District 75 services in:

- General education classrooms
- Special classes located in community school buildings
- Special classes in specialized schools
- Hospitals or at home

The IEP team will determine the appropriate program and class size for your child.

District 75 classes can support students with significant hearing and vision impairments. These classes have specialized equipment and services that can be integrated throughout the day into the classroom. Students with these impairments may be provided with such services as audiology, assistive technology, sign language interpretation, and orientation and mobility services. Instructional materials will be provided in a format accessible by the student, such as braille. Students whose vision and hearing concerns do not require intensive

programming will receive these support services in their general education, co-teaching, or community-based settings.

District 75 programs can also support students who experience significant anxiety in a school setting (students who are school-phobic) and students whose medical or psychiatric issues require temporary or long-term instruction in a hospital or home-based setting.

Related Services

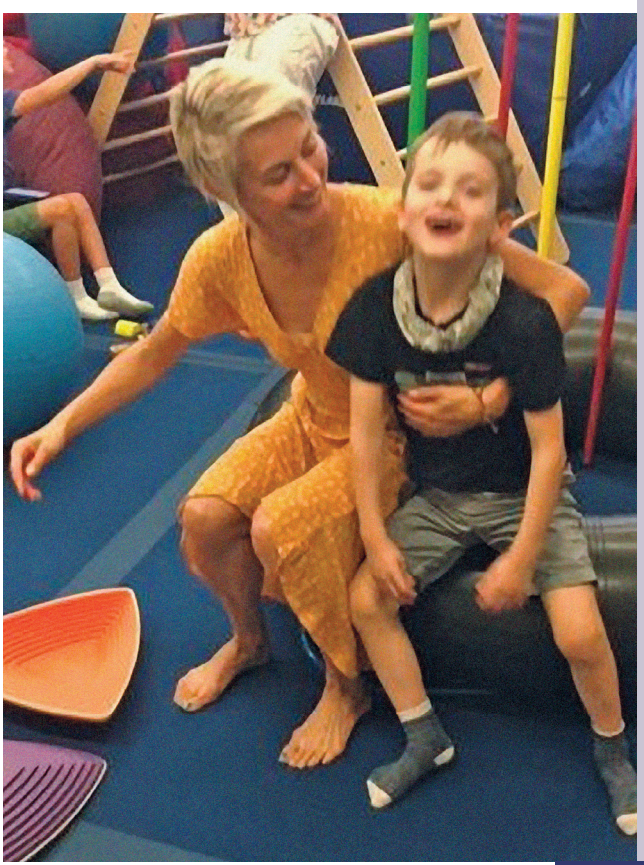
Related services are recommended when appropriate to improve each student's ability to achieve their educational goals. The following are examples of related services:

Counseling helps students recognize and modify behaviors that interfere with learning. Counseling is recommended for students who have social-emotional difficulties that significantly interfere with learning, including trouble interacting appropriately with adults or peers, withdrawal, acting out, low self-esteem, or poor coping skills.

Hearing education services provide support to students who are deaf or hearing impaired. Service is provided by a certified Teacher of the Deaf and Hard of Hearing as a support to students who present with a documented hearing loss. This loss may affect their educational access and performance. Students are taught strategies that strengthen language development, social skills, auditory memory for listening and comprehension. Students who use personal hearing aids are linked with Hearing Assistive Technology (HAT) for access to instruction. Hearing Education Services (HES) audiologists dispense and monitor this technology.

Occupational therapy (OT) helps a student strengthen school-based adaptive and functional skills. These include fine motor skills; the ability to carry out classroom responsibilities and make smooth transitions; functional sensory motor skills; and activities of daily living, including wheelchair management. OT is recommended when the student needs adaptations to their environment, tasks to be modified, or other skills taught to increase their participation in, and performance of, everyday life and school activities. Note that a medical prescription is required for OT. You may be asked to obtain a prescription during the evaluation process if OT is being considered.

Physical therapy (PT) helps a student to improve their physical ability to function and make smooth transitions at school. PT may focus on gross motor



development, mobility, balance, and coordination in various school settings such as the classroom, gym, bathrooms, playgrounds, and staircases. PT may be recommended to support a student in accessing various areas of the school via walking, wheelchair, or other means of mobility. It may be recommended to support a student's participation in classroom activities (in other words, to support the student in participating and maneuvering within the classroom). It may also be recommended to support a student in accessing and participating in the lunchroom, playground, bathroom, and/or transportation. Note that a medical prescription is required for PT. You may be asked to obtain a prescription during the evaluation process if PT is being considered.

Speech/language therapy helps to improve a student's listening, speaking, reading, and writing skills in academic and social situations throughout the school environment. Speech/language therapy is recommended for a student when such support is necessary to improve the student's listening, speaking, reading and writing skills in academic and social situations. Therapists focus on communication skills such as:

- Comprehension (following directions, understanding texts),
- Language (word meaning, putting words together, using correct grammar),
- Articulation (speech sounds),
- Voice (use of voice to produce sound),
- Pragmatics (social language), and
- Fluency (rhythm of speech).

Vision education services support instruction for students with visual impairments. These services use tactile, visual, and auditory strategies to support students in developing academic, social, vocational, life, literacy, and information-acquisition skills. Vision education may be recommended for a child whose vision



is so impaired that they require assistive materials and/or adaptive approaches to function within the classroom.

Orientation and mobility services teach a student how to travel safely within the school setting. These services help teach students to know where they are, where they want to go, and how to get there safely.

Recommending Related Services

Related services should be delivered in the least restrictive environment appropriate, and when possible, schools will integrate them into the classroom. They should be closely coordinated with your child's teachers, other instructional personnel, and you the parent in support of instructional goals. If related services are appropriate for your child, they will be recommended on your child's IEP. The IEP will indicate:

- **Frequency and duration—**The number of sessions per week the services will be provided and the length of each session.
- **Type of related services—**Such as physical therapy, occupational therapy, or speech/language therapy.
- **Location—**Whether those services will be provided in your child's classroom or a separate location, or in a combination of the two.
- **Group size—**Whether your child will be seen individually or in a group, and, if in a group, how many students will be in the group.

Integrating Related Services into the Classroom Can Benefit All Students

When related services are provided in the classroom, it benefits the entire class, not only the individual student being served.

Benefits for the Student:

- Classroom activities are not missed
- More opportunities for skill practice in the natural environment
- Therapist can monitor the effectiveness of strategies
- Fosters social acceptance, self-esteem and social skills
- Teachers can apply strategies after seeing them implemented by therapist

Benefits for the Entire Class:

- Increased achievement for both children with and without disabilities
- Increased attention
- Increased on-task behavior
- Increased performance in the classroom
- Increased performance on standardized tests

Resources/Citations: McWilliam & Scott 2001; Kennedy, Shuka & Fryxell 1997; Mu,. Siegal & Allinder 2000; Kennedy & Itkonen 1994; Hughes 2001; Oriel, George, Peckus & Semon.

Assistive Technology Devices and/or Services

Assistive technology (AT) is any item, piece of equipment, or product system that is used to improve a student's functional capabilities. Low-tech devices include graphic organizers, slant boards, manipulatives (hands-on, interactive math materials, for example) and others. High-tech devices may include tablets and associated software that enable a student to communicate and complete assignments. AT services, such as training and support, may also be recommended to assist with a child's use of AT devices.

If assistive technology may be warranted, the student will first be evaluated. Then, the IEP team will determine whether a particular assistive technology device or service is appropriate for the student.

Assistive technology is tailored to meet a student's individual needs

Subject	Student Challenge	Possible AT Solutions*	
Math	Difficulty computing, organizing, aligning and copying math problems onto paper	Talking calculator, adapted graph paper, manipulatives, software	
Writing	Difficulty with the physical mechanics of writing or spelling, word usage, organization	Word processor, slant board, adapted keyboard/paper, computer/tablet, software	
Reading	Difficulty with decoding, reading fluency or comprehension	Reading pane, highlighted text, digital books, computer/tablet, software	
Communication	Nonverbal or difficulty with intelligible speech	Communication book, speech-generating device, picture communication system, voice output device	
Memory/ Organization	Difficulty with planning, organizing, keeping track of their calendar/schedule/ task list	Graphic organizers, software	
Listening	Difficulty processing and remembering spoken language	Digital recorder, FM unit	

* The devices shown above represent a sample of available tools, and are only listed as examples.

For more information about Assistive Technology, visit
https://www.schools.nyc.gov/special-education/supports-and-services/assistive-technology

Specialized Programs in District 1–32 Schools

Most students with disabilities—including students with autism (also known as Autism Spectrum Disorder, or ASD), students with Intellectual Disabilities (ID), and English Language Learners/ Multilingual Learners (ELLs/MLLs) who have disabilities—are best served in their district schools. However, for some students, a specialized class or program may be appropriate. Special education supports and services that do not currently exist in every school are considered specialized programs. For more information about each program and to download required applications, visit https://www.schools.nyc.gov/special-education/school-settings/specialized-programs/

Specialized programs include:

ACES (Academics, Career, and Essential Skills) Program for Students with Intellectual Disabilities—a special class or program in a community school for some students who are classified as having an Intellectual Disability (ID) and who participate in alternate assessments including NYSAA. To be considered for this program, you must submit an application. For more information contact acesprograms@schools.nyc.gov.

ASD Nest—a reduced class size ICT class setting for students with autism who are academically on or above grade level in all or most academic areas. To be considered for this program, you must submit an application. For more information contact asdprograms@schools.nyc.gov.

ASD Horizon—typically a special class with up to 8 students for students with autism who work toward meeting grade level standards but require individualized support for periods of time during the school day. To be considered for this program, you must submit an application. For more information contact asdprograms@schools.nyc.gov.

Bilingual Special Education (BSE)—a specialized program that the IEP team may recommend if a student requires an Integrated Co-Teaching or Special Class with a language of instruction other than English. These programs are intended to support ELLs/MLLs who benefit from culturally and linguistically responsive instruction that addresses cognitive, academic and linguistic needs. For more information about bilingual special education contact bseprograms@schools.nyc.gov.

Additional Settings

New York State-Supported Schools

State-supported schools provide intensive special education services to children who are deaf, blind or who have severe emotional or physical disabilities and who are determined by the IEP team to be eligible for this type of program. Some state-supported schools provide five-day residential care for children who require 24-hour support.

New York State Education Department Approved Non-Public Schools (Day)

These schools provide programs for children whose intensive educational needs cannot be met in a public school program. State Education Department (SED) approved schools are attended only by students with disabilities and therefore provide no opportunity to be educated

with students without disabilities. An SED-approved non-public school may accept your child only if the school is able to provide the services recommended in their IEP.

The IEP team must consider all options available in the public schools prior to recommending a New York State Education Department Approved Non-Public School. If the IEP team recommends that your child attend a New York State Education Department Approved Non-Public School, the Central Based Support Team (CBST) will work with you to locate an appropriate school for your child and assist you with understanding the admission requirements.

New York State Education Department Approved Non-Public Schools (Residential)

Residential schools are settings that provide intensive programming in the classroom and a structured living environment on school grounds on a 24-hour basis. This program is for children whose educational needs are so intensive as to require 24-hour attention. If it is determined that a residential setting is appropriate, the DOE is required to first consider in-state residential settings before considering an out-of-state school. If the IEP team recommends that your child attend residential school, the CBST will work with you to locate an appropriate school for your child and assist you with understanding the admission requirements.

Home and Hospital Instruction

Home and hospital instruction programs support students in keeping up with their studies while they are unable to attend school for a long period of time (for four weeks or more). Home and hospital instruction programs are not intended to provide a full academic program and may be limited in course options that are not requirements. Staff will work with each student's current school to ensure continuity of instruction and service, to the greatest extent possible given a student's condition.

Home Instruction—If your child is unable to attend school due to orthopedic, non-orthopedic/medical, or psychiatric reasons, you should request home instruction. Your child's school or CSE can support you in submitting the request for home instruction. If your request is authorized, the authorization will have an end date based on when your child is expected to return to school. If your child needs home instruction beyond that expected return date, you should submit an additional request. Please see the home instruction website for additional details on the process for requesting home instruction, http://www.homeinstructionschools.com.

Hospital Instruction—Students who are in a hospital setting can receive instruction if hospital physicians find that they are medically able to receive instruction. Hospital instruction ends when the student is discharged from the hospital. If your child is receiving hospital instruction and will be too ill to return to school when discharged from the hospital, you should submit a request for home instruction before your child is discharged from the hospital to avoid any delay in home instruction being provided.



Additional Special Education Supports and Services

Supplementary Aids and Services

Supplementary aids and services are provided to students in their educational setting to support them to be educated with peers without disabilities as much as possible.

Common examples of supplementary aids and services include (among others):

- Instructional materials in an alternative format (e.g., braille, large print, books on tape)
- Extra time between classes
- Special seating arrangements
- Extra time to complete assignments
- Extended pacing of instruction
- Behavioral supports, or a behavior plan

Paraprofessionals

A paraprofessional assists an individual student, a group of students, or an entire class.

- A paraprofessional recommended on an IEP for an individual student or group of students is an "IEP-assigned paraprofessional" and is a supplementary service.
- A paraprofessional serving an entire class is a "classroom paraprofessional."
- A paraprofessional who is bilingual in the recommended language of instruction and serves students awaiting placement in a bilingual class is an "alternate placement paraprofessional."

When considering an IEP recommendation for a paraprofessional or for a program that includes a paraprofessional, it is important for the IEP team, of which you are an important part, to consider and promote your child's goal to be as independent and self-reliant as possible.

IEP-assigned Paraprofessionals can provide assistance to students with IEPs in order to aid learning and promote student independence. They can support students individually or in small groups. IEP-assigned paraprofessionals may assist students for all or a portion of the school day. IEP-assigned paraprofessional support may be recommended when necessary to allow a student to participate safely and fully in classroom and other school activities, to achieve success in the academic setting. An IEP team may recommend a paraprofessional when the student requires additional supervision or support

to safely benefit from instruction and/or related services. A paraprofessional may serve one of the following functions:

- Health
- Behavior support
- Orientation and mobility
- Toileting

Because paraprofessional support is very intensive, the IEP team will consider the annual goals that will result in increased student independence and the reduction or elimination of the need for the paraprofessional as appropriate.

Health Paraprofessional

A health paraprofessional may be appropriate when a student's medical or functional needs prevent the student's participation in and/or decreases the value of school-based activities. When recommended, a health paraprofessional will assist with a student's identified health/medical needs, such as:

- Activities of daily living (including transfers from wheelchair to adaptive equipment, ambulation assistance, oral feeding, observing food intake, etc.);
- Monitoring a student for specific signs and symptoms related to their medical condition; and
- Notifying and/or bringing the student to the school nurse for treatment or medications.

Behavior Support Paraprofessional (also known as "Crisis Management Paraprofessional")

A behavior support paraprofessional may be recommended when a student has serious behavior problems that cannot be addressed through a Behavioral Intervention Plan (BIP) alone, that is consistently used by school staff to



address the student's behaviors. If your child does not already have a BIP, the IEP team will, with your permission, conduct a Functional Behavioral Assessment (FBA) to learn more about your child's behavior. If warranted, they will then develop the BIP. If a behavior support paraprofessional is recommended, they will help ensure the safety of the student and others. The paraprofessional will work on building the student's ability to manage their own behavior as independently as possible. This may include:

- Monitoring and supporting a student's BIP through data collection and supporting a student's behavioral goals on their IEP; and
- Putting behavior management strategies into action.

Orientation and Mobility Paraprofessional

An orientation and mobility (O&M) paraprofessional may be recommended by an O&M teacher for visually impaired students who:

- receive educational vision services and O&M instruction; and
- are considered unsafe independent travelers in school.

Once the student can safely travel independently, the IEP team will decrease the recommendation or will no longer recommend an O&M paraprofessional. When recommended, the O&M paraprofessional will support the student in carrying over skills from O&M instruction. This may include:

- Improving the student's understanding of spatial and environmental concepts and/or use of information received by the senses for negotiating travel;
- Improving the student's use of low vision aids and/or long cane to complement travel skills; and/or
- Ensuring the student's safety in traveling within the school and participating in the classroom.

Toileting Paraprofessional

A toileting paraprofessional provides either toilet training or toileting assistance, depending on the student's needs. **Toilet training** is usually a temporary support provided until a student is able to independently use the restroom. **Toileting assistance** includes assisting a student to and from the bathroom, transferring a student to and from the toilet, and assisting with wiping and cleaning hands, among other activities.

A toileting paraprofessional may be recommended when a student requires toilet training and/or toileting assistance, and this is the only paraprofessional assistance the student requires. If your child is supported by a health or behavior support paraprofessional, that paraprofessional will also assist in this capacity if needed. Toilet training and/or toileting assistance may instead be provided by classroom paraprofessionals in certain classroom settings.

Transportation Paraprofessional

A transportation paraprofessional may be recommended for a student who has behavioral, cognitive, or health concerns that require sustained individual support on the bus to and from school to ensure their safety and/or the safety of others.

If you believe your child may need a transportation paraprofessional, tell the IEP team in advance of the IEP meeting. You may be asked to provide medical documentation.

At the IEP meeting the IEP team, including you, will determine the level of support your child needs and why; what this support consists of; and where, when, and how the support will be provided to meet your child's IEP goals. The IEP team will consider less intensive options for supporting your child, and a paraprofessional will only be recommended if less intensive options are not appropriate to meet your child's needs.

Supports for School Personnel on Behalf of the Student

Your child's teachers, paraprofessionals, related service providers, or other school staff may require training or instruction in order to support your child most effectively. For example,

- A student's paraprofessional might require training in positive behavioral interventions to best implement a student's Behavioral Intervention Plan;
- A student's teacher might require training in American Sign Language to communicate with a student;
- A student's teacher might require training in the assistive technology device recommended for the student;
- A student's health paraprofessional might require training from the school nurse or the student's physician to understand the student's health needs;
- A student's toileting paraprofessional might require training from a related service provider in safe transfers of the student between the student's wheelchair and the toilet.

If recommended, supports for school personnel will be individualized to your child's needs.

Accommodations and Modifications

Accommodations are adjustments to the environment, instruction, or materials that give students with disabilities equal access to instruction and assessments. They are designed to level the playing field for students with disabilities. If your child requires accommodations, the specific accommodations will be written in your child's IEP. Some examples of accommodations are rephrasing of questions and instructions, extended time, reference aids, and breaks.

Modifications change the content and/or the instructional level of the curriculum. Modifications are made for students with disabilities who are unable to understand the content an instructor is teaching. An example of modification is redesigning the focus of the assignment to include only the most important key points.

Speak with your child's IEP team about whether accommodations and/or modifications are appropriate for your child.

Specialized Transportation

Most students with IEPs travel to and from school in the same manner as students without IEPs. Specialized transportation always includes door-to-door busing (meaning that the bus stops at the curb as close to the student's home as possible) but may also include other necessary transportation accommodations, such as a transportation paraprofessional, nurses, and medically related accommodations. An IEP team may recommend specialized transportation for children whose documented needs affect their

ability to travel to or from school. This recommendation is reviewed each year.

If you believe your child may require specialized transportation, talk to your child's IEP team. The IEP team will provide you with any necessary paperwork to complete as part of this process. This may include:

- Authorization for Release of Medical Information Pursuant to HIPAA. This is completed and signed by you.
- Request for Medical Accommodations. This is completed and signed by your child's doctor. It must explain the need for door-to-door busing and any other medical accommodations your child may need.

A physician from the Office of School Health (OSH) may review your request for specialized transportation accommodations. The OSH physician may need to discuss any requests made with your child's doctor. The OSH physician may participate in your child's IEP meeting for the part of the meeting in which transportation is discussed.

If the IEP team determines that your child requires specialized transportation and/or specialized transportation accommodations, the IEP will specify this.

Accessible Education Materials

Accessible Education Materials (AEM) are textbooks and instructional materials that have been converted into a format that is accessible to a student who is unable to use standard printed materials due to visual impairment, blindness, or any other reason. These formats include:

- Braille
- Large print
- Audio
- Digital text

If you believe your child requires AEM, reach out to your school. School staff can determine which, if any, format would benefit your child. If your child requires AEM, the materials will be provided in school at the DOE's expense.

Adapted Physical Education

Adapted physical education is a specially designed program of developmental activities, games, sports and rhythms suited to the interests, capabilities and limitations of individual children who may not safely or successfully participate in the activities of a regular physical education program. Your child may be recommended for adapted physical education if their disability interferes with the ability to perform activities involved in a regular physical education program.

Alternate Assessment

Alternate assessments are used to evaluate the performance and progress of students with severe cognitive disabilities who are unable to take part in standard assessments, even with testing accommodations. These measures of achievement:

- Provide eligible students with an alternative way to demonstrate their knowledge and skills
- Measure students' progress towards achieving academic goals
- Support teachers and specialists in adapting instructional strategies and supports
- Are used by schools as part of their usual classroom assessment practices

The NY State Alternate Assessment (NYSAA) is part of the annual state testing process for all eligible students in Grades 3–12. The IEP must specify

that your child is eligible for alternate assessments. Students who participate in alternate assessments are not eligible for a high school diploma.

Extended School Year (Twelve-Month School Year Services)

If your child requires their education to continue during the summer in order to prevent substantial regression, extended school year services may be provided. Substantial regression usually means that it would take 8 weeks or more for the student to regain what they had previously learned after the summer break. Extended School Year (ESY) services can be different than services that your child receives during the school year, and will be decided in the IEP meeting.

Parent Counseling and Training

If you, the parent, need some help understanding the special needs of your child, parent counseling and training can provide you with information about your child's development and/or specific disability, and will help you to support the implementation of your child's IEP. Parent counseling and training is recommended if your child is in special classes with staffing ratios of 8:1+1, 6:1+1, or 12:1+4 or if your child has autism. These are not adult counseling services and are not intended to meet your personal or educational needs.

Travel Training

Travel training services are short-term, comprehensive, and specially designed instruction that teach high school students with disabilities other than blindness or visual impairments to navigate public transportation vehicles and facilities safely and independently as they travel between home and a specific destination (usually school or the workplace).

General Education with Declassification Services

Students who no longer need special education services are declassified after a reevaluation. Students who have been declassified will not have an IEP, but may receive the following services to ease the transition to general education:

- Instructional support
- Instructional modifications
- Testing accommodations
- Related services

Services may continue for up to one year after your child has been declassified. In addition, students who are declassified are eligible to continue to receive testing accommodations if specified on the declassification IEP notice. Students who are declassified in Grades 8–12 may be eligible for Safety Net graduation options if noted in the last IEP. To learn more about graduation options, visit Section 6: Graduation for Students with IEPs.

section 5

After the IEP Is Developed: Arranging Services

Arranging Services

Before the end of the IEP meeting, the IEP team will provide you with a printed copy of the **Recommended Special Education Programs and Services page** of the draft IEP.

You should receive a copy of the finalized version of the IEP within two weeks of the meeting. If you have not received a copy of your child's IEP within two weeks of the meeting, contact your child's IEP team. You will also receive a **Prior Written Notice** in your preferred language, if it is a covered language as defined by the DOE. The Prior Written Notice will inform you of the services that your child will receive.

When the DOE arranges services, every effort will be made for your child to remain in their current school. Most students with disabilities can and should attend the school they would attend if they did not have a disability, whether that is the home zone school or a school of their choice.

However, if your child will receive the service at a different site than the one they are currently attending, you will receive a separate notice informing you of the school name and address. If you would like to arrange a visit to the recommended site, you should contact the person listed on the notice.

Arranging Related Services

If your child has been recommended to receive related services, the DOE will arrange services to be provided. If the DOE is unable to provide the service with its own staff or with staff from agencies under contract, a **Related Service Authorization (RSA)** may be issued. An RSA allows you to identify an appropriately licensed, independent provider of the service. The services will be provided at no cost to you. If an RSA is issued, you will be provided with instructions about how to use it, and information on finding available independent providers. A list of independent providers is available on our website: https://www.schools.nyc.gov/special-education/supports-and-services/related-services/finding-an-independent-provider. Your child's school or CSE can help you

Most students with disabilities can and should attend the school they would attend if they did not have a disability

with the process. If you have questions or would like assistance in locating a provider, you can reach out to the contact listed on the RSA.

Arranging English as a New Language (ENL) Services

If your child has been recommended to receive **English as a New Language Services (ENL)**, the DOE will assign a DOE ENL teacher to provide these services. If a DOE ENL teacher is not available, an authorization for ENL services (the "ENL Authorization") will be issued. It will allow you to identify an appropriately licensed independent provider of ENL at no cost to you. The ENL Authorization will indicate the frequency and duration of services. You will also be provided with information regarding whom to contact at the DOE for assistance if you have questions or are unable to locate an available provider.

Arranging Transportation

Most students with IEPs travel to and from school in the same manner as students without IEPs. If your child attends a neighborhood school, they may be able to walk to school. Depending on the distance of the school from your home, your child may receive a New York City MetroCard for use on public transportation or receive stop-to-school busing. The Office of Pupil Transportation website http://www.optnyc.org/home/default.htm has more information on eligibility for these transportation options.

Your child's IEP team will also consider whether your child needs door-to-door busing as a result of their disability. This is called *specialized transportation*.

If the IEP team finds that your child requires door-to-door busing, this will be indicated on your child's IEP. Arranging for this bus service may take up to five days. The Office of Pupil Transportation (OPT) will notify you in writing of the date that bus service will begin. If you do not receive information from OPT, call the hotline at 718-392-8855 for assistance. For more information about specialized transportation and specialized transportation accommodations, see **Specialized Transportation** in Section 4: The Individualized Education Program (IEP).

Parent's Consent for Special Education Services

If your child has never received special education services, we will ask you for written permission to start services. You will be asked to indicate your consent for special education services at the bottom of the **Prior Written Notice** and return it to the address listed. If you do not consent, your child will remain in general education without the recommended services. Once your consent is received, the recommended special education services will be arranged.

Students Who Are Already Receiving Special Education Services

If your child has already been receiving special education services, your consent is not required again. The **Prior Written Notice** will list any changes to your child's recommended special education services. The recommended special education services will be arranged by the date listed on the Prior Written Notice.

If you disagree with the services recommended on the Prior Written Notice or the IEP, you should contact your child's IEP team to try to resolve. If you cannot agree on the recommended services, you have due process protections. You can request **Mediation** or an **Impartial Hearing**. These protections are discussed in Section 8: Getting Support.

Withdrawing Consent for Special Education Services

At any time after consenting to special education services, you may withdraw your consent for the special education services specified in your child's IEP. The request must be in writing. However, if you withdraw consent, you are withdrawing consent to *all* special education and related services specified in your child's IEP. This means that your child will not receive any of their services or accommodations, including specialized transportation, assistive technology, program modifications, testing accommodations, or alternate assessment eligibility. In addition, if you withdraw consent, your child will no longer be eligible for disciplinary protections for students with disabilities (including **Manifestation Determination Reviews (MDRs)**). For more information on disciplinary protections for students with disabilities, see the **Glossary of Terms** or the Procedural Safeguards Notice at https://www.schools.nyc.gov/special-education/help/your-rights. You may not withdraw consent for only a portion of the special education and related services.

If you disagree with all or some of the IEP recommendations, but do not wish to withdraw your consent for the provision of special education services, you should contact your child's IEP team. If you cannot come to agreement, you may use the due process procedures of Mediation or Impartial Hearing outlined in Section 8: Getting Support.

The IEP team may ***not*** use the due process procedures of Mediation or Impartial Hearing to require services to be provided to your child without your consent.

Consent for Medicaid Billing

Families of all children with IEPs will be asked by the DOE to sign a consent allowing the department to bill Medicaid to pay for a portion of the cost of special education services. All families are asked to sign these forms, regardless of their Medicaid status. This has absolutely no impact on the family, except that the school system will have additional funding to serve children with IEPs.

If your family receives Medicaid benefits, your coverage will not be canceled, the lifetime coverage in place will not decrease and services that your family receives will not be affected in any way. You are not required to sign up for Medicaid for your child to receive the services on their IEP.

Placement Timelines

The DOE is generally required to provide a placement for your child as recommended in the IEP as follows:

- For initial (first-time) referrals to special education, your child will receive a placement within 60 school days from the date that you provided consent to evaluate your child.

- If your child is already receiving special education services, your child will receive a placement within 60 school days from the date of the referral for a reevaluation.

However, if you unreasonably delayed the evaluation, referral, and/or placement process, this timeline may be adjusted.

P-1 Letter

If your child is recommended for a special class and you have not received a placement offer within the timelines, you may receive a **P-1 letter**.

A P-1 letter entitles you to enroll your child in an appropriate special education program in a New York State Education Department approved non-public day school (NYSED-approved non-public school). This placement will be at the DOE's expense for that school year. A list of NYSED-approved non-public schools will accompany the notice.

If you have questions about this process or require assistance, you should contact the representative listed at the bottom of the P-1 letter.



section 6

Graduation for Students with IEPs

Graduating from High School

All students, including students with disabilities, are encouraged to work toward the highest diploma option available. Once in high school, you should work closely with your child, their guidance counselor and teachers to plan and track both academic and personal accomplishments to optimize your child's opportunities after high school. Below is an overview of the high school diploma and commencement credentials available to students with disabilities. For the most up to date information on graduation requirements, please visit: https://www.schools.nyc.gov/school-life/rules-for-students/graduation-requirements.

Diploma Options

In New York State, students can earn three types of diplomas:

1. A Regents Diploma
2. An Advanced Regents Diploma
3. A Local Diploma

All of these diplomas are valid high school diplomas. An Advanced Regents Diploma lets students show additional skills in math, science, and languages other than English.

To earn a diploma, students must earn specific course credits and pass specific Regents exams. All students may take the Regents more than once. If you believe your child is not on track to graduate, please speak to your school's guidance counselor immediately.

Exams

Students must pass five Regents exams to earn a Regents Diploma or four Regents exams and one other approved credential or exam (sometimes referred to as the 4+1 option). All students must earn 44 credits in order to receive a diploma.

Students with disabilities may earn a Local Diploma through Safety Net options. One Safety Net option allows students with disabilities to graduate with a Local Diploma by earning different exam scores.

Students may earn an Advanced Regents Diploma by passing additional Regents exams.

Speak to your child's guidance counselor and IEP team to learn more about Regents exams and other exam flexibilities. For more information, please visit https://www.schools.nyc.gov/school-life/rules-for-students/graduation-requirements.



Commencement Credentials

In addition to the diploma options described, students with IEPs may earn the following commencement credentials.

- Career Development and Occupational Studies (CDOS) Commencement Credential
- Skills and Achievement Commencement Credential

The Career Development and Occupational Studies (CDOS) Commencement Credential is designed to recognize students' mastery of the career-readiness skills defined in the New York State CDOS learning standards. Students in high school who participate in work-based learning opportunities and/or career and technical education (CTE) classes are better prepared for life after high school. These experiences help students determine their future careers and interests and are often a key part of a challenging academic program. Career development experiences supplement, and do not replace, a rich academic program. **All students** may earn the CDOS credential in addition to a diploma (including students without IEPs). The CDOS credential can also be used as the "+1" option if a student has passed 4 Regents exams, completing the testing requirements for that student.

The Skills and Achievement Commencement Credential (SACC) recognizes students' skills, strengths, and levels of independence in academic, career development, and foundation skills needed for post-school living, learning, and working. Only students with severe disabilities who participate in the NYSAA are eligible for the SACC. The SACC requires at least 12 years of education (excluding kindergarten).

The CDOS credential and the SACC are *not* equivalent to a high school diploma. They do not require students

to earn credits or pass exams. Rather, the CDOS credential and SACC provide opportunities for students to develop and demonstrate mastery of the skills that may help them succeed in work experiences after high school. When a student graduates with the CDOS credential or SACC as a standalone credential (instead of a high school diploma), the student is not guaranteed employment when a diploma is required and does not qualify to enter the military or enter many colleges and postsecondary institutions. Students who receive these credentials are eligible to continue attending school until earning a high school diploma or until the end of the school year in which they turn 21 years old (whichever occurs first).

Diploma Requirements

To earn a diploma, students must earn 44 credits.

8 **English** credits	**8** **Social Studies** credits	**4** in Global History **2** in U.S. History, **1** in Government and **1** in Economics
6 **Mathematics** credits (at least **2** credits in Advanced Math)	**6** **Science** credits (minimum of **2** Life Science and **2** Physical Science)	**2** **Language** other than English credits (**6** credits for the Advanced Regents diploma)
2 **Arts** credits	**4** **Physical Education** credits	**1** **Health** credit
7 **Elective** credits (**3** credits for the Advanced Regents diploma)		

A student with a disability may be exempt from meeting the languages other than English requirement if their IEP indicates that the requirement is not appropriate due to their disability.


BRONX
LEHIGH
The College at
BROCKPORT
STATE UNIVERSITY OF NEW YORK
LEHIGH


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section 7

Life After High School — College, Career, and Postsecondary Planning

We want to make sure that all students get an education that gives them the greatest opportunities for college, career, and independent living after high school. Planning in middle and high school will make sure that your child has the greatest number of options. It is important that students and parents understand how courses and exams taken through middle and high school align with a student's goals for life after high school. All students, including students with disabilities, are encouraged to work toward the highest diploma option available to them. Once in high school, you should work closely with your child, their guidance counselor, and their teachers to plan and track both academic and personal accomplishments. In your child's first year of high school, discuss diploma options with their IEP team. As a parent, your participation in transition planning is important to your child's success. You will work with staff at your child's school to create a transition plan that reflects your child's goals, desires, and abilities.

Before your child graduates from high school, you will receive written notice that identifies the diploma or credential that your child will receive and informs you that your child is no longer eligible to receive a FAPE after graduation. If your child exits high school with either the CDOS Commencement Credential or the Skills and Achievement Commencement Credential as their sole exiting credential, they will receive written assurance that they are eligible to attend school through the school year in which they turn 21. For the most up-to-date information on graduation requirements, and other valuable resources in planning your child's middle and high school path, please visit https://www.schools.nyc.gov/school-life/rules-for-students/graduation-requirements.

Transition Planning

Transition planning is the process used to make sure that students with IEPs are prepared for life after high school. Its purpose is to give a basic structure for preparing your child to live, work and play in the community, as fully and independently as possible. During this process, you, your child, school staff, family members, and/or community organizations share information, agree on goals, and create a plan for your child's life after high school. Based on your child's strengths, preferences, and interests, activities and services are identified to help your child reach their goals. These are called the **Coordinated Set of Transition Activities**. The formal process of transition planning begins in the year in which your child turns 12 (or earlier if appropriate), when the first vocational assessment is given. Transition planning and services is a process that

continues throughout your child's school experience, culminating with a **Student Exit Summary**.

For detailed information about transition planning, review the Family Guide to Transition Planning: Preparing Students with IEPs for Life After High School at www.schools.nyc.gov/specialeducation.

Overview of Requirements for Transition Services

Federal and state laws and regulations protect the rights of children with disabilities and their families to make sure that all students with disabilities have access to a FAPE. These laws and regulations provide some standards that are relevant to transition planning for students with disabilities. Here are some things guaranteed under federal and/or state law and regulation:

- A vocational assessment must be completed for students with disabilities during the year in which the student turns 12 years of age. To learn more about vocational assessments, see the **Transition and vocational assessments** section below.
- Starting when your child is 14 years old, the IEP team will begin considering your child's goals for life after high school. These are called **measurable postsecondary goals**. These goals focus on education, employment and independent living skills (when needed). At this same time, the IEP team will begin determining the activities that will support your child in meeting those postsecondary goals. These are called the **coordinated set of transition activities.** To learn more, read the section **Transition and the Individualized Education Program (IEP)**.
- When there is an agency that is likely to be responsible for providing or funding out-of-school or postsecondary services, the IEP team will ask for your consent to invite a representative from that agency to any IEP meetings at which transition will be discussed. You can learn more about some agencies in the chart in the Resources section **Transition Service Agencies and Adult Service Systems**.
- Your child must be invited to the IEP meeting to discuss Transition Services. As an essential member of the IEP team, they will be able to discuss their strengths, preferences and interests. If the student is unable to attend the meeting, the IEP team must ensure the student's preferences and interests are considered and reflected in the IEP.

Transition and Vocational Assessments

Transition and vocational assessments help your child think about what they want to do after high school and how to get there. They are used to collect information about your child's abilities, preferences, behaviors, and interests in order to identify future education, living, personal, community, and career goals. In addition, they help the IEP team to create a high-quality IEP and transition plan for your child.

Transition assessments target your child's job interests, preferences, and skills. They provide key information that will help to determine your child's goals for life after high school.

Vocational assessments are one type of transition assessment. Vocational assessments help you, your child, and the school make important decisions about planning for your child's future based on their strengths, interests, and desires. They also help teachers to understand how your child currently functions in relation to future career opportunities. They focus on identifying your child's level of ability, skills, and supports needed.

All of these assessments are designed to support the idea of "self-determination." Self-determination means that your child will have a say in what their path will be, particularly in regard to education and training, employment, and independent living skills.

Vocational assessments may be formal or informal.

Informal assessments may include interviews, questionnaires, observations, interest inventories, preference assessments and transition planning inventories. The informal assessment used is based on your child's age and abilities.

Formal assessments include aptitude tests, achievement tests, and standardized tests. The assessment results include a comparison to other students your child's age. Formal assessments are sometimes used when the informal assessments do not yield enough information for schools to create a high-quality transition plan for your child.

Transition assessments target your child's job interests, preferences, and skills.

Beginning in the calendar year your child turns 12 years of age, you, your child, and other members of the planning team will begin the transition assessment process by conducting vocational assessments. If your child is older than age 12 when they receive their first IEP, the vocational assessment will be completed at that time.

Level I Vocational Assessment

The Level I Vocational Assessment is an informal assessment that includes three parts—a student part, a parent part, and a teacher part. A review of school records is also part of this assessment. The assessment collects information about your child's interests, preferences, and goals for life after graduation including future employment, education, or training. The Level I Vocational Assessment is updated as needed before each IEP meeting.

As the parent, your contributions are important to the transition assessment process. Make sure you are providing input into the Level I Vocational Assessment and at any IEP meetings at which these assessments are discussed.

Level II Vocational Assessment

If the IEP team decides that additional information is needed, a Level II Vocational Assessment may be recommended. A Level II Vocational Assessment can help to determine the level of a student's vocational skills,

strengths and interests. This is a formal assessment using a normed/standardized instrument that tests for skills and abilities. It may include an interest inventory and detailed information about perception, motor, spatial, verbal, and/or numerical comprehension, attention and/or learning styles gained from a formal assessment.

Level III Vocational Assessment

A situational vocational assessment, sometimes called a Level III Vocational Assessment, may be completed when a student is participating in a real or simulated work-based learning experience or has a job. Work-based learning experiences include paid and unpaid internships, community service and volunteer work, and paid employment. In a situational vocational assessment, the student is observed completing work-related tasks. Afterwards, the student is given feedback to help them build their skills to ensure a successful work experience now and in the future. The Level III Vocational Assessment can provide helpful information to support a student's success in the workplace.



Transition and the Individualized Education Program (IEP)

The following explains the IEP sections most relevant to transition planning. However, information learned from vocational assessments will be considered throughout the IEP.

Graduation options are discussed and planned for at IEP meetings. It is important to remember that promotion criteria, the courses a student takes, and whether a student participates in alternate or standard assessments all impact the graduation options that are available to a student. These factors must be considered at each IEP meeting to ensure that the student is on track to meet their postsecondary goals. For the most up-to-date information on graduation options and requirements visit https://www.schools.nyc.gov/school-life/rules-for-students/graduation-requirements.

Measurable Postsecondary Goals

Your child's IEP will begin to include measurable postsecondary goals starting at age 14 (or at a younger age, if appropriate). Measurable postsecondary goals state what your child wants to do or achieve after high school. Your child's measurable postsecondary

goals are shaped in part by information collected from transition and vocational assessments. During the IEP meeting, the IEP team, which includes you and your child (when transition will be discussed), will review these assessments and your child's postsecondary goals. It is important to understand that your child's goals for after high school may change many times as their interests develop. For this reason, postsecondary goals are reviewed and updated every year, along with the rest of the IEP. Measurable postsecondary goals can be in the areas of:

- Education/Training
- Employment
- Independent Living (if needed)

Annual Goals

Annual goals describe what your child is expected to achieve in one year. The goals are aligned with the academic, social, and physical skills that your child needs in order to achieve their goals for life after high school. Both measurable postsecondary goals and annual goals are developed based on your child's individual and unique qualities and needs and are connected to your child's interests and desires for life after high school.

Sample Goals

While annual goals focus on what your child will achieve in one school year, measurable postsecondary goals focus on what your child will do after high school. Every child is different, and so are their plans for life after high school. Below is an example of a unique post school plan with supporting annual and measurable postsecondary goals.

Example: If Student A wants to drive commercial trucks after high school, they would have to learn the skills needed to pass the commercial driver's license test. Student A's annual goal will support their postsecondary goal of becoming a commercial driver.

Measurable Postsecondary Goal: *After graduating from high school, Student A will obtain a full-time job as a long-distance truck driver.*

Annual Goal: *Student A will determine the meaning of words and phrases as they are used in a non-fiction text with 75% accuracy in 3 out of 4 trials, as measured by verbal explanation.*

Coordinated Set of Transition Activities

The coordinated set of transition activities are the activities and services that will help your child gain the skills needed to meet their goals. Your child's IEP will begin considering a coordinated set of transition activities starting at age 14 (or at a younger age, if appropriate). These activities and services are based on your child's individual needs, strengths, preferences, and interests. For each activity, the person responsible for the activities or services, usually the school or another agency, is identified.

The Coordinated Set of Transition Activities are divided into six categories:

- Instruction
- Related services
- Community experiences
- Development of employment and other post-school adult living objectives
- Acquisition of daily living skills (if applicable)[4]
- Functional vocational assessment (if applicable)

4 See NYSED explanation of acquisition of daily living skills at http://www.p12.nysed.gov/specialed/publications/iepguidance/transition.htm.

Transition Planning Roles

The following explains each IEP team member's role in the IEP planning process as it relates to transition planning. In addition, all NYC Middle Schools and High Schools are required to identify a Transition Team Leader to help provide leadership and direction to the team in order to ensure that students' transition needs are met and that they are on the path to postsecondary success.

Student

- Learns about the transition planning process
- Completes their part of vocational assessments
- Explores interests and possible vocational or career options
- Develops self-advocacy skills (for example, they should learn to express their interests, preferences, and goals)
- Reflects on strengths and needs to determine the most appropriate graduation options for them
- Identifies appropriate courses with career and/or school counselor
- Learns about their disability and how to get supports after high school, if appropriate
- Actively participates in IEP meetings
- Asks questions about graduation requirements, diploma options, and anything else

Parent/Guardian

- Learn about the transition planning process
- Share observations, thoughts, and concerns about your child's strengths, needs, and preferences with the school and IEP team
- Complete the parent portion of the vocational assessment
- Help your child explore their current interests and future goals
- Advocate for your child and assists them in developing self-advocacy skills
- Become knowledgeable about graduation requirements, diploma pathways, post-school options, and resources (see **Section 7: Graduation for Students with IEPs** for more information)
- Determine the assistance your child will need to become as independent as possible
- Identify the people, community agencies, and other resources that can help your child reach their goals
- If a **Transition Service Agency** (also called a "Participating Agency") is identified consider providing your consent to invite an agency representative to the IEP meeting (Review the Resources section *Transition Services Agencies and Adult Service Systems*)
- Actively participate in your child's IEP meetings
- Keep records of the transition-related services and activities
- Ask questions

Teacher/Case Manager

- Helps your child explore goals for life after high school
- Gives different transition assessments to learn about your child's strengths, needs, interests, and preferences related to education, employment, and independent living
- Works with your child to develop measurable postsecondary goals

- Engages your child in a coordinated set of transition activities aligned to their goals
- Becomes familiar with outside agencies and their programs and connects families with relevant agencies, when appropriate
- Coordinates IEP meetings including all stakeholders
- Engages the family in the process, including getting consent from you when needed (for example, to invite a participating agency)
- Provides explicit instruction on self-determination and self-advocacy skills
- Provides guidance on the rights of individuals with disabilities
- Encourages your child to communicate with school staff about progress toward IEP goals.

School Counselor's Role

- Assesses your child's career interests and skills for desired career path
- Develops a plan for your child's time in high school, along with your child and other IEP team members
- Develops/updates your child's annual transition plan, along with the student and other IEP team members
- Leads conversations about your child's strengths, interests, needs, and preferences
- Discusses graduation requirements, diploma pathways, post-school options, and resources with the student and their family
- Provides advice on the courses that will help your child reach their goals.

Encourage your child to learn about the transition planning process

Transition Service Agency Representative

A **Transition Service Agency** (also known as a "participating agency") is an agency that is likely to provide or pay for services after your child leaves high school. If any agency is likely to be responsible for providing or paying for services, your child's school should help you identify that agency and will request your consent to invite a representative from that agency to your child's IEP meeting. For more information about participating agencies, see the Resources section *Transition Service Agencies and Adult Service Systems*.

- Attends IEP meetings, when invited
- If the participating agency does not attend the IEP meeting when invited, the participating agency representative should be involved in planning transition services
- Actively participates with other IEP team members to make sure there is a shared understanding of plans and services
- Provides information on resources and supports available to help your child reach their goals
- Provides necessary services and supports to help your child achieve their goals
- Explains services that can be provided after your child leaves high school.

section 8

Getting Support

Parent Rights

Your participation in your child's education and during the IEP process is very important.

You will be provided with a copy of the Procedural Safeguards Notice at various points during your child's involvement in special education. This notice contains a statement of your rights and role as the parent of a child with a disability. It is available on the DOE website at https://www.schools.nyc.gov/special-education/help/your-rights.

To ensure that you are able to exercise your right of participation fully, you also have the following rights:

The Right to Be Fully Informed

You must be adequately notified, in your preferred language or mode of communication, of your rights in the educational decision-making process.

The Right to Consent

There are instances identified in this Family Guide when you will be asked to provide your consent. Before you provide your consent, the school or CSE must fully inform you in your preferred language of all information relevant to the action for which you are giving consent. If you provide your consent, this means that you understand and agree in writing to that action.

Consent is voluntary. You may withdraw your consent at any time. Withdrawing consent does not negate (undo) an action that has occurred after you gave your consent and before you withdrew it.

The Right to Participate

You have the right to participate in all educational decision-making regarding your child. You can exercise this right by attending IEP meetings. You are an important member of your child's IEP team, and the school or CSE will work with you to ensure that you can attend these meetings.

You can also exercise your right to participate by bringing other individuals who have knowledge or special expertise regarding your child or their disability to IEP meetings.

If you require an interpreter at IEP meetings, the DOE must provide one.

The Right to Challenge

You have the right to challenge school decisions made regarding your child. You can request mediation or an impartial hearing to challenge any decision that affects your child's education or to resolve differences. If you require an interpreter at a mediation or impartial hearing, the DOE will provide one.

Your due process rights—including mediation and impartial hearings—are discussed in more detail in the section below regarding Resolving Concerns.

You have the right to participate in all educational decision-making regarding your child.

The Right to Appeal

You have the right to appeal the decision of an Impartial Hearing Officer to the New York State Review Officer. You also have the right to appeal State Review Officer's decision to federal court.

If the DOE appeals the decision of an Impartial Hearing Officer, you have the right to contest that appeal.

For more information on impartial hearings and appeals see the section below regarding **Resolving Concerns**.

The Right to Have a Certified Additional Parent Member at the IEP Meeting

You have the right to request a Certified Parent Member attend the IEP meeting. You must request this from your child's IEP team at least 72 hours before the meeting, in writing.

The Right to Obtain and/or Examine Your Child's School Records

You have the right to obtain and/or examine any of your child's school records.

Before an IEP meeting, you can prepare by reviewing and considering all reports and assessments that may be considered. To request these reports and assessments prior to the meeting, you can make the request to your child's IEP team.

Sometimes parents disagree with statements made in their child's record. If this is the case, you can request, in writing, to meet with the school or CSE Chairperson to discuss the area(s) of disagreement. Please see Chancellor's Regulation A-820, "Confidentiality and Release of Student Records; Records Retention" at https://www.schools.nyc.gov/school-life/policies-for-all/chancellors-regulations for more information.

Due Process Rights

You have the right to challenge the IEP team's decisions about your child's eligibility, evaluation, services, and placement. If you disagree with the IEP team's actions or refusal to take action in these matters, you may request **mediation** or an **impartial hearing**.

Resolving Concerns

If you need help or have questions about your child's special education programs and services, there are many steps that you can take to find a solution.

1. **Speak to your child's IEP team.** This might include their teacher, related service provider, school psychologist, or guidance counselor. Alternatively, if your child attends a non-public school, contact your CSE. These professionals work directly with your child and know them best. They can work with you to ensure that your child's needs are met.
2. **Set up a meeting with the principal.** The principal will discuss your concerns with you, collaborate on



a plan for resolving them, and then ensure that school staff implement the plan.

3. **Contact the Family Support Coordinator (FSC) at the superintendent's office.** FSCs provide families with information and resources. They will also work closely with you and the school on any kind of issue, including those related to special education.
4. **E-mail** SpecialEducation@schools.nyc.gov**.** Staff at the central Special Education Office, along with your school's Borough or Citywide Office, will support you in finding a resolution.
5. **Call the special education hotline at 718-935-2007 or 311.** 311 calls related to special education are shared with the central Special Education Office. They will support you in finding a resolution.
6. **Contact a New York State Special Education Parent Center.** New York State Special Education Parent Centers provide parents of students with disabilities with information, resources, and strategies to assist parents and guardians in understanding their child's disability and the special education process. To learn more visit www.p12.nysed.gov/specialed/techassist/parentcenters.
7. **Ask for a mediation.** There are 24 Community Dispute Resolution Centers across the state that provide mediation services, operating under a contract with the state education department. These mediators are not affiliated with the DOE; their only goal is to resolve disputes amicably and efficiently.

   During mediation, you and a member of the IEP team sit down with a neutral third party who assists and

encourages you and the DOE to reach an agreement. A specially trained approved mediator will conduct the mediation. During mediation, you and the DOE discuss the issues and work together to develop a mutually agreeable solution.

To request a mediation, contact your child's school, CSE, or CPSE, or you can directly contact the Community Dispute Resolution Center in your borough. Learn more by visiting the mediation page on the NY State Education Department website at http://www.p12.nysed.gov/specialed/techassist/mediation.htm or by visiting www.nysdra.org.

8. **Request an impartial hearing.** As a parent, you have the right to request what is known as an "Impartial Hearing." The DOE is also permitted to request an Impartial Hearing to resolve limited issues, such as obtaining a parent's consent for a child to be evaluated. An Impartial Hearing is a legal proceeding. During an Impartial Hearing, you will appear before an Impartial Hearing Officer and present your side of the story. The Hearing Officer is *not* a DOE employee. The Hearing Officer will listen to you and the DOE representative, take evidence from witnesses and documents, and make a written determination regarding how to resolve the issues that you have raised.

Impartial Hearing requests must be made in writing to the Impartial Hearing Office at:

Office of Impartial Hearings
131 Livingston Street, Room 201
Brooklyn, New York 11201
718-935-3280

Your request for Impartial Hearing must:

- Be in writing;
- Describe the facts relating to your concerns and a proposed solution;
- State your child's name and address; and
- Name the school your child attends.

You can use a model form letter to request an Impartial Hearing. This model is available on the DOE Impartial Hearing page at https://www.schools.nyc.gov/special-education/help/impartial-hearings.

Impartial Hearing Process

If you have requested an Impartial Hearing, "pendency" (sometimes called "stay-put") applies. This means that your child will remain in their current placement for the duration of any due process proceedings until the matter is resolved or you have reached an agreement with the DOE.

Resolution

Within 15 days of your request for an Impartial Hearing, the DOE will meet with you to discuss resolving the issues you have described in your request.

A Resolution Meeting will not be held in these three instances:

1. If you and the DOE agree **in writing** to waive the Resolution Meeting, the Impartial Hearing Office must be notified and an Impartial Hearing will be scheduled within 14 calendar days.
2. If you withdraw your request for the Impartial Hearing, a Resolution Meeting does not need to be held.

3. If the DOE has made documented attempts to schedule a Resolution Meeting and you do not participate (and you and the DOE have not agreed to waive the Resolution Meeting in writing), the Impartial Hearing Officer must be informed and the DOE has the right to ask that your request be dismissed.

Hearing Process

After receiving a request for an Impartial Hearing, you will receive a complete description of the Impartial Hearing process. You may be contacted by telephone to schedule the Impartial Hearing. You will also be notified in writing of the scheduled date, time, and location.

You have the right to bring an attorney to your hearing. If you wish to be represented by an attorney, they should file a Notice of Appearance with the Impartial Hearing Office before the hearing.

If you require an interpreter, please inform the Impartial Hearing Office. An interpreter will be provided upon request.

Following the hearing, the Impartial Hearing Officer will issue a decision. A copy of the decision will be mailed to you.

The Hearing Officer's decision is based entirely on evidence admitted at the hearing. It should include the reasons and the basis for the decision. The decision also informs you and the department of the right to appeal the decision to the New York State Review Officer.

Appeals to the State Review Officer

If you disagree with the decision made in an Impartial Hearing, you have the right to submit a written appeal to the State Review Officer. To do so you must provide notice within 25 days after the date of the decision. Instructions on how to make an appeal to the Office of State Review can be found at www.sro.nysed.gov.

A request for an appeal is a legal process. While a lawyer is not required, procedures for submitting an appeal are specific and must be followed exactly to avoid delay or dismissal.

Difference between Mediation and Impartial Hearings

While the goal of both mediation and impartial hearings is to resolve disagreements, there are some important differences.

An impartial hearing is a more formal process in which you and the DOE present evidence and witnesses. After both testimonies, the Impartial Hearing Officer makes a decision. This decision is final unless an appeal is requested.

Mediation is a less formal process that allows you and the DOE to discuss issues with a neutral party facilitating the discussion. Unlike in an Impartial Hearing, the mediator does not issue a decision. Instead, you and the DOE work toward coming to an agreement.

For more information on Impartial Hearings, visit https://www.schools.nyc.gov/special-education/help/impartial-hearings. For more information regarding mediation, visit the NY State Education Department website at http://www.p12.nysed.gov/specialed/techassist/mediation.htm or visit www.nysdra.org.

Important Contacts and Resources

Committee on Special Education (CSE) Offices

CSE	Districts	Address	Phone Number
1	7 9 10	One Fordham Plaza, 7th Floor Bronx, New York 10458	718-329-8000
2	8 11 12	3450 East Tremont Avenue 2nd Floor Bronx, New York 10465	718-794-7490 or 718-794-7429
3	25 26	30-48 Linden Place Flushing, New York 11354	718-281-3461
3	28 29	90-27 Sutphin Boulevard Jamaica, New York 11435	718-557-2553
4	24 30	28-11 Queens Plaza North, 5th Floor Long Island City, New York 11101	718-391-8405
4	27	Satellite Office 82-01 Rockaway Boulevard, 2nd Floor Ozone Park, New York 11416	718-642-5715
5	19 23 32	1665 St. Marks Avenue Brooklyn, New York 11233	718-240-3558 or 718-240-3557
6	17 18 22	5619 Flatlands Avenue Brooklyn, New York 11234	718-968-6200
7	20 21	415 89th Street Brooklyn, New York 11209	718-759-4900
7	31	715 Ocean Terrace, Building A Staten Island, New York 10301	718-420-5790
8	13 14 15 16	131 Livingston Street 4th Floor Brooklyn, New York 11201	718-935-4900
9	1 2 4	333 7th Avenue 4th Floor New York, New York 10001	917-339-1600
10	3 5	388 West 125th Street New York, New York 10027	212-342-8300



Transition & College Access Centers (TCACs)

The Transition and College Access Centers (TCACs) support students with IEPs and their families through the transition from school to adult life. Whether it is preparing to attend college, entering the workforce, or living independently for the first time, TCACs exist to help students with IEPs achieve their goals, and support families and school staff in planning for their students' life after high school.

These centers serve as student-centered resource hubs that offer trainings, workshops, and opportunities that provide the tools needed to plan for adult life. Some examples of workshops include Career Planning Tools, College Considerations, Work and Organizational Habits, Resume Writing, and Self-advocacy and Communication Skills. To learn more about Transition and College Access Centers visit the centers, contact the centers directly, or visit www.schools.nyc.gov/specialeducation

Locations

Brooklyn Transition & College Access Center
Boys & Girls High School, Room G170
1700 Fulton Street
Brooklyn, NY 11213
718-804-6790
bklyntcac@schools.nyc.gov

Bronx Transition & College Access Center
DeWitt Clinton High School, Room 150
100 W Mosholu Parkway S
Bronx, NY 10468
718-581-2250
bxtcac@schools.nyc.gov

Queens Transition & College Access Center
90-27 Sutphin Boulevard, Room 152
Queens, NY 11435
718-557-2600
qnstcac@schools.nyc.gov

Staten Island Transition & College Access Center
The Michael J. Petrides Educational Complex
715 Ocean Terrace, Building A, Room 204
Staten Island, NY 10301
718-420-5723
sitcac@schools.nyc.gov

Manhattan Transition & College Access Center
269 West 35th Street, Room 702
New York, NY 10024
212-609-8491
mntcac@schools.nyc.gov

District 75 Office of Transition Services & Postsecondary Initiatives
400 First Ave., Room 440
New York, NY, 10010
212-802-1568
D75ots@NYCDOE.onmicrosfot.com

Transition Service Agencies and Adult Service Systems — Which services should I access for my child?

Adult Career and Continuing Education Services Vocational Rehabilitation (ACCES-VR)	Students with physical, developmental, or emotional disabilities whose disability may prevent them from working or make work more challenging, and students capable of working with additional training or education.	http://www.acces.nysed.gov/vr
Office of People with Developmental Disabilities (OPWDD)	Students with developmental disabilities that occur before age 22, including intellectual disabilities, Autism, Cerebral Palsy, Seizure Disorders and other neurological impairments, IQ score lower than 70 and deficits in adaptive behavior skills.	www.opwdd.ny.gov
Office of Mental Health (OMH)	Students with Axis 1 diagnosis (severe mental illness, i.e. major depression, bipolar disorder, schizophrenia).	https://www.omh.ny.gov/
Commission for the Blind (CB)	Students who are legally blind or visually impaired	https://ocfs.ny.gov/main/cb/



Additional Important Information

Glossary of Terms

Accommodations: Tools and procedures that give students with disabilities equal access to instruction and assessment. They are designed to level the playing field for students with disabilities.

Accessible Educational Materials (AEM) These are textbooks and instructional materials that have been converted into a format that is accessible to a student who is unable to use standard printed materials. These formats include:

- Braille
- Large print
- Audio
- Digital text

Adapted Physical Education (APE): Adapted physical education is a specially designed program of developmental activities, games, sports and rhythms suited to the interests, capabilities and limitations of individual children who may not safely or successfully participate in the activities of a regular physical education program. Your child may be recommended for adapted physical education if their disability interferes with the ability to perform activities involved in a regular physical education program.

Adoptive Parents: Adults who have been granted responsibility for a child through legal proceedings.

Alternate Assessment: Used to evaluate the performance and progress of students with severe cognitive disabilities who are unable to take part in standard assessments, even with testing accommodations.

New York State Alternate Assessment (NYSAA) is part of the annual NYS testing process for all eligible students in Grades 3–12 and in high school. If your child's IEP specifies that they are eligible for alternate assessment, NYSAA will be used for State assessments in Grades 3 through 12. For more information regarding Alternate Assessment, see **Section 4: The Individualized Education Program**, under the heading **Alternate Assessment**.

Alternate Placement: A temporary service provided when a student's bilingual ICT or bilingual special class is not available. An alternate placement is a monolingual ICT or special class, with a paraprofessional who is bilingual in the recommended language of instruction of the student(s) awaiting a bilingual class.

Annual Goals: Specific, measurable goals that describe what your child is expected to achieve in the disability-related area(s) over a one-year period.

Annual Review: After your child has received special education services, an IEP meeting is held at least once each year to review your child's progress. This is called an "Annual Review." During the annual review the team will:

- Discuss your child's progress toward their goals
- Review the special education services provided
- Determine services and goals for the following year

Assessment Authorization Letter: A letter that is issued to a parent that will allow them to obtain an assessment from a non-DOE evaluator at DOE expense.

Assistive Technology Devices and Services: An Assistive Technology Device is any piece of equipment, product or system that is used to increase, maintain or improve the functional capabilities of a child with a disability. Low-tech devices include graphic organizers, slant boards, manipulatives (hands-on, interactive math materials, for example) and others. High-tech devices may include tablets and associated software that enable a student to communicate and complete assignments. AT services, such as training and support, may also be recommended to assist with a child's use of AT devices.

Audiological Assessment: A specialized hearing assessment conducted to determine whether a student has a significant hearing loss/impairment.

Autism: The disability classification of Autism is characterized by a developmental disability that has a significant impact on the student's communication skills, social interactions, and academic performance. It is generally evident before age three. For more information, see the **Disability Classifications** heading in **Section 3: The IEP Meeting**.

Behavioral Intervention Plan (BIP): A student-specific plan that is based on the results of a Functional Behavioral Assessment (FBA) to address problem behavior. It includes:

- The target behavior(s) and goal(s)
- Positive behavioral interventions and strategies
- Accommodations or modifications
- How the plan will be monitored and updated if needed

Bilingual Assessment: An assessment conducted in both English and a child's home or native language.

Bilingual Special Education (BSE): BSE is a specialized program for students who require an Integrated Co-Teaching (ICT) or Special Class (SC) with a language of instruction other than English. These programs are intended to support English Language Learners/Multilingual Learners (ELLs/MLLs) who benefit from culturally and linguistically responsive instruction that addresses cognitive, academic and linguistic needs.

Career Development and Occupational Studies (CDOS) Commencement Credential: This non-diploma commencement credential is available to students with IEPs who participate in standard assessments. It may be issued as an endorsement to an Advanced Regents, Regents, or Local diploma or as the student's sole exiting credential. The CDOS Commencement Credential recognizes student mastery of the CDOS learning standards and the completion of a career preparation program. It is designed to provide students with IEPs an opportunity to develop the skills needed to succeed in work after high school. Schools will provide students who earn only a CDOS written confirmation that they are eligible to return and earn a diploma until they reach age 21.

Chancellor's Regulations: A set of rules written for NYCDOE schools related to students, families, school staff, and school operations, which can be found at https://www.schools.nyc.gov/school-life/policies-for-all/chancellors-regulations.

Child Find: New York City has an obligation to identify, locate, and evaluate each child attending any New York City school who has a disability or is suspected of being a child with a disability, regardless of the severity of the disability. This is called the "Child Find" obligation. Child Find extends to all children with disabilities—including children who are homeless, wards of the state, not attending a New York City public school, etc.—whether or not the DOE is providing educational services to the child.

Class Size: The maximum number of students allowed in a group or class.

Classroom Observation: An observation of a student in their primary educational setting to see how the student learns and what behaviors they exhibit.

Clinician: A term used for a DOE assessment professional, such as a school psychologist or school social worker.

Commissioner's Regulations: State Education Department regulations based on Federal and State education laws that specify the steps school districts must follow in the special education referral, evaluation, and placement process, which can be found at http://www.p12.nysed.gov/specialed/lawsregs/part200.htm.

Committee on Preschool Special Education (CPSE): The CPSE is responsible for coordinating the special education process for children ages 3 to 5. CPSEs serve families in the district where a family resides, regardless of where children receive preschool services. There are 10 CPSEs in different areas of the city. Each CPSE is part of a larger Committee on Special Education (CSE) office. A Chairperson oversees the CSE office, including the CPSE. For more information regarding preschool special education, please refer to the DOE's **Family Guide to Preschool Special Education Services.**

Committee on Special Education (CSE): Committees on Special Education (CSEs) coordinate and carry out the special education process for students who are attending private, religious, or charter schools, or are otherwise not enrolled in a DOE public school. Contact information for the CSEs is located in **Section 8: Getting Support** under the heading **Committee on Special Education (CSE) Offices**.

Confidentiality: The DOE must maintain the student's special education records in a manner that ensures that only appropriate staff have access.

Consent: There are instances when you will be asked to provide your consent during the special education referral, evaluation, and placement process. Providing consent means that you:

- Have been fully informed about the action for which you are giving consent, and
- Understand and agree in writing to that action.

Consent is voluntary on your part and you may withdraw your consent at any time. Your withdrawal of consent does not undo an action that has occurred after you gave your consent and before you withdrew it.

Continuum of Services: The range of education programs and services in the DOE to support educating children with disabilities in their least restrictive environment.

Covered Languages: This refers to the most common languages other than English used by DOE students and their families. Currently, the DOE has identified nine covered languages, which, together with English, are the primary languages used by over 95% of DOE students and their parents. These languages are: Arabic, Bengali, Chinese, French, Haitian Creole, Korean, Russian, Spanish, and Urdu.

Deaf-Blindness: This is a disability classification used when a student has both hearing and visual impairments. These impairments cause severe communication and other developmental and educational needs that cannot be accommodated in special education programs solely for students with deafness or students with blindness. For more information, see the **Disability Classifications** heading in **Section 3: The IEP Meeting**.

Deafness: This is a disability classification characterized by a hearing impairment that is so severe that the student is impaired in processing linguistic information through hearing, with or without amplification, and the hearing impairment adversely affects the student's educational performance. For more information, see the **Disability Classifications** heading in **Section 3: The IEP Meeting**.

Declassification: Students who no longer need special education services are declassified by the IEP team after a reevaluation.

Declassification Support Services: Students who no longer need special education services are declassified after a reevaluation. Students who have been declassified will not have an IEP, but may receive the following services to ease the transition to general education:

- Instructional support
- Instructional modifications
- Related services

These services may continue for up to one year after the student has been declassified. In addition, the declassification IEP may list testing accommodations that must be provided to the student after they have been declassified. Students who are declassified in Grades 8–12 may be eligible for Safety Net graduation options if their last IEP notes this. To learn more about graduation options, visit **Section 6: Graduation for Students with IEPs**.

Deferred Placement: During the IEP meeting, there may be a discussion regarding whether the recommended special education services should begin immediately, or, instead, whether the services should begin at the beginning of the next term or school year. This is referred to as a "deferred" placement and requires consent from the parent.

Disability Classification: Disability Classification refers to the type of disability that most affects a student's educational performance. There are 13 classifications. The IEP team will determine the appropriate classification, and it will be memorialized on the student's IEP.

Due Process: Procedures that, by law, are used to ensure your child's rights to a FAPE and your rights to be involved and have a full understanding of that process.

Due Process Complaint: Also called a Request for an Impartial Hearing, this is a written complaint filed by a parent or a

school district involving any matter relating to the identification, evaluation, educational placement or provision of a FAPE to a student with a disability. This may result in an Impartial Hearing. For more information on the Impartial Hearing Process, see **Section 8: Getting Support** under the **Impartial Hearing Process** heading.

Due Process Hearing (Impartial Hearing): A due process hearing (or an "impartial hearing") is an administrative proceeding before an Impartial Hearing Officer who is not an employee of the DOE. Both the parents and the school district present arguments, witnesses, if any, and evidence. For more information on the Impartial Hearing Process, see **Section 8: Getting Support** under the **Impartial Hearing Process** heading.

Early Intervention (EI): The EI Program, under the New York City Department of Health and Mental Hygiene (DOHMH), supports families with children ages birth to 3 who have disabilities or developmental delays.

Emotional Disability: This is a disability classification used when a student exhibits one or more of the following characteristics over a long period of time and to a marked degree that affects the student's educational performance:

- Difficulty learning that cannot be explained by intellectual, sensory or health factors;
- Difficulty building or maintaining satisfactory relationships with peers and teachers;
- Inappropriate types of behavior or feelings under normal circumstances;
- A general feeling of unhappiness or depression; or
- A tendency to develop physical symptoms or fears associated with personal or school problems.

For more information, see the **Disability Classifications** heading in **Section 3: The IEP Meeting**.

English Language Learner (ELL): An English Language Learner (also called a "Multilingual Learner") is a student who speaks a language other than English at home and scores below a state-designated level of proficiency in English on either the NYSITELL and/or the NYSESLAT.

English as a New Language (ENL): In an English as a New Language program teachers work with the students to build their speaking, writing, reading and listening skills in English using supports in the students' home language. The goal of the program is to support students as they become capable in English.

Evaluation: The process of collecting information about a student's strengths and weaknesses to improve their educational program. The information collected through assessments, observations, and interviews will assist the team in determining the child's present levels of functioning and educational needs.

Exit Summary: When a student with an IEP will no longer be eligible for special education—either because they will (a) graduate with a local or Regents endorsed diploma or (b) no longer be age-eligible (the year in which the student turns 21)—an "Exit Summary" will be provided. An Exit Summary summarizes the student's

academic achievement and functional performance and includes recommendations on how to assist the student in meeting their postsecondary goals.

Extended School Year Services (ESY): Extended school year services are special education programs and services provided during July and August. They may be recommended for students with disabilities who require special education over the summer to prevent substantial regression.

Children with an IEP recommendation for ESY may either:

- Receive the same program and services in July–August as in September–June; or
- Receive less intense services in July–August.

If ESY services are recommended, the IEP will specify the program and services that will be provided in July and August.

Free Appropriate Public Education (FAPE): Special education programs and related services that are provided at public expense, under public supervision and direction, and without charge to the parent.

Functional Behavioral Assessment (FBA): When a student engages in problem behaviors that may interfere with their learning or the learning of others, or that place the student or others at risk of harm or injury, a Functional Behavioral Assessment may be conducted. A Functional Behavioral Assessment is a process that is used to identify:

- The reasons for a behavior
- The possible interventions to address it

General Education Curriculum: The body of knowledge and range of skills that all students, including students with disabilities, are expected to master.

Hearing Impairment: This is a disability classification characterized by hearing loss that adversely affects the student's educational performance but that is not included under the definition of Deafness. This type of hearing loss can be permanent or fluctuating. For more information, see the **Disability Classifications** heading in **Section 3: The IEP Meeting**.

Health Services: A type of related services provided to students who are identified as having medical and/or health needs that require the assistance of a nurse or health paraprofessional during the school day. Examples of this service may be feeding, ambulation, suctioning, or catheterization.

High School Diploma: A certificate awarded to show that a student has successfully completed the courses and exams required to graduate from high school.

Home Instruction: Home instruction is an educational service that is provided to students with disabilities who are unable to attend school due to a medical or psychological condition.

Home Language Identification Survey (HLIS): A parent questionnaire to determine whether or not a language other than English is spoken in the student's home.

Hospital Instruction: Hospital instruction is an educational service provided on a temporary basis to students who are hospitalized for medical conditions that prevent them from attending school.

Impartial Hearing: An impartial hearing is an administrative proceeding before an Impartial Hearing Officer who is not an employee of the DOE. Both the

parents and the school district present arguments, witnesses, if any, and evidence. For more information on the Impartial Hearing Process, see **Section 8: Getting Support** under the **Impartial Hearing Process** heading.

Independent Assessment: A parent may request an independent assessment at DOE expense if they disagree with an assessment conducted by the DOE. The request must be made in writing to the student's IEP team. The DOE will either agree to pay for the independent assessment or will file a due process complaint to demonstrate that the assessment conducted by the DOE was appropriate.

A parent may also pay for an assessment themselves or obtain an assessment through insurance. If you acquire an independent assessment and would like it to be considered by your child's IEP team, be sure to provide it to DOE staff in advance of the IEP meeting.

Individualized Education Program (IEP): The IEP documents a child's eligibility for special education services and formalizes the plan to provide special education programs and services that are appropriate for the child's unique needs. It contains specific information about a child and the education program designed to meet these needs, including:

- A child's current development and/or performance in school, and goals that can be reasonably accomplished in a school year;
- Special education program and related services (including counseling and speech, occupational, or physical therapy), paraprofessional support, assistive technology, behavior intervention, and modifications;
- Participation with nondisabled children, to the extent possible;
- Date services will begin, how often they will be provided, where they will be provided, and for how long; and
- Means of measuring a child's progress.

Individualized Education Program (IEP) Team: The IEP team is a group of members who share information and work together to determine whether your child has a disability and requires special education services, and if so, what services are appropriate. You are an important member of the IEP team. If the IEP team, based upon the evaluation(s), determines that your child has a disability and that special education services are necessary, an IEP will be developed at the meeting. IEP team members may include, but are not limited to:

- a general education teacher;
- special education teacher;
- school psychologist;
- social worker;
- district representative;
- you, the parent; and
- your child.

Individualized Education Services Program (IESP): If your child is attending or will attend a private or religious school in New York City, and the IEP team finds your child eligible for special education, the IEP team will develop an Individualized Education Services Program (IESP) instead of an IEP. The IESP will describe the special education services and/or related services to be provided while your child attends the private or religious school.

Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA): The IDEA is a Federal law that gives students with disabilities the right to receive a FAPE in their least restrictive environment from age 3 through the end of the school year in which the student turns 21 years or graduates with a high school diploma.

Initial Referral: The initial referral is a request that begins the special education evaluation process to determine whether the student has a disability and requires special education services. The initial referral can be made by the student's parent, the principal of the student's DOE school, or the chairperson of the student's CSE. To make an initial referral, the parent should submit a written request for evaluation to the student's DOE school or CSE.

Intellectual Disability: This is a disability classification characterized by significantly below average intellectual functioning and a deficit in adaptive behavior. For more information, see the **Disability Classifications** heading in **Section 3: The IEP Meeting**.

Interpreter: A person who orally communicates in the parent or child's preferred language from English during a conversation face-to-face or over-the-phone with the parent and/or assessment(s) for the child.

Learning Disability: This is a disability classification characterized by a disorder in one or more of the basic psychological processes involved in understanding or using language (spoken or written). This will include an imperfect ability to listen, think, speak, read, write, spell, or do mathematical calculations. For more information, see the **Disability Classifications** heading in **Section 3: The IEP Meeting**.

Least Restrictive Environment (LRE): The IEP team will recommend special education services that provide a student with a disability with a FAPE in their least restrictive environment. This means that your child will be educated alongside their non-disabled peers to the maximum extent appropriate. Placement of students with disabilities in special classes, separate schools, or other removal from the general educational environment occurs only when the nature or severity of the disability is such that even with the use of supplementary aids and services, education cannot be satisfactorily achieved. The least restrictive environment is therefore different for each child.

Limited Mobility: A student with limited mobility is one who utilizes a mobility device—such as a wheelchair, walker, crutches, or cane—to negotiate the environment, or any student who negotiates the school environment with difficulty and/or at a slower pace than their peers, whether it is due to muscle weakness, lack of endurance, or any other reason. Students with specific mobility impairments, whether physical or sensory, for whom the design of a building may pose barriers, must be offered access to programs to the extent required by law.

Local Diploma: The local diploma is a high school diploma option available to students who are eligible for the Safety Net and will not meet or exceed the requirements for an advanced Regents or Regents diploma. The Safety Net provides additional flexibilities to support students with disabilities in earning a high school diploma. If a student uses

the Safety Net options, they will earn a local diploma. To learn more about graduation options, visit **Section 6: Graduation for Students with IEPs**.

Management Needs: The IEP will indicate a student's management needs, which include the type and amount of environmental modifications, human resources, or material resources that are required to enable a student to benefit from instruction.

Manifestation Determination Review (MDR): A Manifestation Determination Review (MDR) is a meeting between the parent and members of the school community. It is held when a student with a disability is subject to a disciplinary change of placement. A disciplinary change of placement occurs if a student is removed from their current educational program due to a superintendent's suspension, principal's suspension, and/or teacher removal:

- For more than 10 consecutive school days; or
- For more than 10 cumulative school days in a school year as a result of a pattern of removals.

The MDR will include a discussion of the student's disability, the behavior that led to the removal, and whether the behavior was related to their disability or related to a failure to implement the student›s IEP.

Mediation: Mediation is a confidential, voluntary process that allows people to resolve disputes without a formal due process hearing. An impartial mediator helps each person or group to:

- express their views and positions, and
- understand the other's views and positions

Mediators help people discuss the issues and reach an agreement. Their role is not to recommend solutions or take positions or sides. In mediation, if an agreement is reached by everyone, it is considered a binding agreement. This means that it cannot be appealed.

Medical Examination: A doctor's report on a student's physical and medical condition that is taken into consideration during the IEP meeting.

Modifications: Modifications change the content and/or the instructional level of the curriculum. While accommodations are changes in formats or procedures, modifications change the difficulty level and/or quantity of the content being taught. Modifications are made for students with disabilities who are unable to comprehend all of the content an instructor is teaching. For example, assignments might be reduced in number or modified significantly to include only key points.

Multilingual Learner: A Multilingual Learner, also known as an "English Language Learner (ELL)," is a student who speaks a language other than English at home and scores below a state-designated level of proficiency in English on either the NYSITELL and/or the NYSESLAT.

Multiple Disabilities: This is a disability classification used when a student has more than one impairment, such as intellectual disability and blindness, intellectual disability and deafness, etc. This combination creates educational needs that cannot be met in a special education program solely for one of the impairments. The term does not include deaf-blindness. For more information, see the **Disability Classifications** heading in **Section 3: The IEP Meeting**.

New York State English as a Second Language Achievement Test (NYSESLAT): The NYSESLAT is taken by English Language Learners/Multilingual Learners (ELLs/MLLs) in kindergarten through Grade 12. They will continue to receive ESL and bilingual services until their scores on the NYSESLAT indicate that they have gained proficiency in English and no longer need additional support.

New York State Identification Test for English Language Learners (NYSITELL): A test given to determine a student's level of proficiency in English and need for bilingual/ENL services.

New York State Approved Non-Public School: These are privately operated schools that provide special education placements and are approved by New York State.

Non-Disabled: A student who is not classified as having a disability and receives no special education services.

Notice of Referral: A letter sent to parents, no more than five days after the receipt of a referral for special education services.

Occupational Therapy: Occupational Therapy is a related service designed to help a child maintain, improve, or restore school-based adaptive and functional skills.

Orientation and Mobility Services: These services teach a student how to travel safely within the school setting. These services help teach a student to know where they are, where they want to go, and how to get there safely. Orientation and mobility services are provided to students with visual impairments.

Orthopedic Impairment: This is a disability classification used when a student has a severe impairment to their body that adversely affects their academic performance. The term includes impairments caused by:

- Congenital anomaly (clubfoot, absence of some member, etc.)
- Disease (poliomyelitis, bone tuberculosis, etc.)
- Other causes (cerebral palsy, amputation and fractures or burns which cause contractures)

For more information, see the **Disability Classifications** heading in **Section 3: The IEP Meeting**.

Paraprofessional: A paraprofessional provides assistance to an individual student, a group of students, or to an entire class.

- A paraprofessional recommended on an IEP (for an individual student or group of students) is an "IEP-assigned paraprofessional."
- A paraprofessional serving an entire class is a "classroom paraprofessional."
- A paraprofessional who is bilingual in the recommended language of instruction and serves students awaiting placement in a bilingual class is an "alternate placement paraprofessional."

An IEP-assigned paraprofessional will serve one of the following functions:

- Behavior support
- Health
- Toileting
- Orientation and mobility

Parent Member: A parent member is a parent of a child with a disability in New York City or a neighboring school district who can participate in IEP meetings. Parents have the right to request (in writing) the participation of the Parent Member at an IEP meeting, with 72 hours notice.

Pendency: When a parent or the DOE requests an Impartial Hearing, the child is entitled to remain in their "last agreed upon placement" until all due process proceedings are complete. This placement is called pendency. For more information on the Impartial Hearing Process, see **Section 8: Getting Support** under the **Impartial Hearing Process** heading.

Person in Parental Relationship: In certain circumstances, a person who is not the parent can act in a parental relationship. A person acting in a parental relationship is a member of the IEP team throughout the special education process. If the birth parents return to the student's life at any time and assume parental responsibility, the IEP team involves them in the decision-making process and no longer recognizes the other parenting relationships that existed prior to the parent's return.

Preferred Language: This is the language that a parent feels most comfortable speaking. This may or may not be the language regularly spoken at home.

Prior Written Notice: This is a notification sent by the DOE to the parent(s). This notification will inform the parent(s) that the DOE is proposing to initiate or change the identification, evaluation, and/or educational placement of the student

Psychiatric Assessment: This is a specialized assessment conducted by a psychiatrist when severe emotional and/or behavioral problems may be impacting success in school.

Psychological Assessment: An assessment conducted by a licensed psychologist to measure a student's strengths and weaknesses in overall learning abilities and how they relate to other children and adults.

Recommendation: A determination of special education supports and services made at an IEP meeting.

Reevaluation: An evaluation conducted for a student with a disability who already receives special education services. A reevaluation will be conducted at least once every three years and upon request. A request for a reevaluation can be made by the student's parents, teacher, or school district. A reevaluation with not be conducted more than once a year unless the school and the parent agree otherwise.

Referral: An initial referral begins the process to determine whether the student has a disability and requires special education services. A referral can only be made by a school principal, a CSE chairperson, or a parent.

Regents Diploma: In New York State, there are three types of diploma: a local diploma, a Regents diploma, and an Advanced Regents diploma. There are specific examination and credit requirements to earn a Regents Diploma. To learn more about graduation options, visit **Section 6: Graduation for Students with IEPs**.

Related Services: Related services are services that may be required to assist a student with a disability to receive meaningful educational benefit. These may include counseling, occupational therapy, physical therapy, speech-language therapy, orientation and mobility services, and other support services.

Related Services Authorization (RSA): An RSA is letter given to parents that allows them to obtain the services of a non-DOE provider of specific related services at DOE expense. It will be issued to the parent when the DOE has not identified a related services provider in a timely manner.

Requested Review: Upon request of the parent, an IEP meeting may be held to review the child's IEP to determine if it continues to meet their needs.

Response to Intervention (RtI): Response to Intervention is an approach used by schools to match students with the teaching practices and level of support that is matched to their needs.

Resolution Meeting: After a parent files a due process complaint (also called a "request for impartial hearing"), the DOE and the parent will meet to discuss possible resolution of the issues of the complaint. This meeting is called a "resolution meeting." For more information on the Impartial Hearing Process, see **Section 8: Getting Support** under the **Impartial Hearing Process** heading.

Safety Net: The Safety Net allows students with disabilities to earn a Local Diploma by fulfilling alternative exam requirements. This option is available to students with IEPs, students with 504 plans specifying Safety Net eligibility, and students with disabilities who were declassified in Grades 8–12 but whose last IEP specified Safety Net eligibility. To learn more about graduation options, visit the **Section 6: Graduation for Students with IEPs**.

Short-Term Objectives or Benchmarks: Short-term objectives are the intermediate steps that must be learned in order to reach an annual goal. Benchmarks are major milestones that the student will demonstrate that lead to an annual goal. Short-term objectives or benchmarks will be written and memorialized on the IEP for any school-age student who participates in alternate assessment.

Skills and Achievement Commencement Credential (SACC): This non-diploma commencement credential is available to students with IEPs who participate in alternate assessment and have attended school for at least 12 years, excluding kindergarten. It must be accompanied by documentation of the student's skills, strengths, and levels of independence in academic, career development and foundation skills needed for post-school living, learning and working.

A student who earns a SACC as the sole exiting credential is eligible to remain in school until they receive a Regents or local

diploma or through the end of the school year in which they turn 21 years of age. To learn more about graduation options, visit **Section 6: Graduation for Students with IEPs**.

Social History: A social history meeting is an interview with parents concerning a student's health, family, and school background, including social relationships. The interview is part of a student's evaluation and is usually conducted by a school social worker.

Special Class: All students in a special class have IEPs that identify needs that cannot be met in a general education classroom. Special education teachers, providing specially designed instruction, teach special classes.

Specially Designed Instruction: Specially designed instruction consists of adaptations to the content, methodology (pedagogical approaches to instruction), or the delivery of instruction to address the unique needs that result from the child's disability. The purpose of specially designed instruction is to ensure the student has access to the general curriculum and is able to meet the educational standards of the school district that apply to all students.

Speech or Language Impairment: This is a disability classification characterized by a communication disorder—such as stuttering, impaired articulation, a language impairment or a voice impairment—that adversely affects the student's educational performance. For more information, see the **Disability Classifications** heading in **Section 3: The IEP Meeting**.

Speech-Language Therapy: Speech-language therapy is a related service that helps to improve a child's listening, speaking, reading, and writing skills in academic and social situations throughout the school environment, with a focus on improving the child's communication skills.

Transition: For students with IEPs, "Transition" means planning for life after high school. Beginning when the student is age 14, the IEP team will discuss the student's goals, transition needs, and transition activities at each IEP meeting until the student graduates or until the end of the school year in which they turn 21. Transition focuses on improving students' academic and functional achievement in many different settings, including education, employment, and independent living. It is a student-centered process. That means that it addresses the unique strengths, needs, and preferences of each student. For more information about transition, refer to **Section 7: Life After High School**, or to the **Family Guide for Transition Planning**.

Translator: A person who changes written text of a document/assessment from one language to another.

Traumatic Brain Injury: This is a disability classification used when a student with a brain injury caused by some kind of physical force or by certain medical conditions such as stroke, encephalitis, aneurysm, and anoxia or brain tumors that adversely affects their academic performance. The term does not include injuries that are present from birth or caused by birth trauma. For more information, see the **Disability Classifications** heading in **Section 3: The IEP Meeting**.

Travel Training: Travel training services are short-term, comprehensive, and specially designed instruction that teach high school students with disabilities other than blindness or visual impairments to negotiate public transportation vehicles and facilities safely and independently as they travel between home and a specific destination (usually school or the workplace). Eligible students age 14 and above can receive travel training services.

Twelve-Month School Year Services: See Extended School Year services (ESY).

Visual Impairment: This is a disability classification used when a student has an impairment in vision that, even with correction, adversely affects their academic performance. The term includes both partial sight and blindness. For more information, see the **Disability Classifications** heading in **Section 3: The IEP Meeting**.

Vocational Assessment: A vocational assessment helps the student, family and school to begin to discuss the needs, interests and aspirations of the student as they prepare for high school, graduation and adult life. They must first be completed for all students with disabilities at age 12 or older (or who will turn 12 by the end of the calendar year in which the evaluation is completed). A Level 1 Vocational Assessment includes a review of school records, teacher assessments, and parent and student interviews to determine vocational skills, aptitudes and interests. For more information about transition, refer to **Section 7: Life After High School**, or to the **Family Guide for Transition Planning**.

Languages Other Than English

إذا كانت هذه اللغة هي لغتك الأصلية، فإن دليل العائلات متوفر بهذه اللغة.
اطلب نسخة بلغتك الأصلية من الموظَّف الذي تعمل معه، أو احصل عليها من الموقع الالكتروني المذكور أدناه.

এটি যদি আপনার দেশীয় ভাষা হয়, এই ভাষায় আপনি ফ্যামিলি গাইড পাবেন।
আপনার দেশীয় ভাষায় একটি কপির জন্য আপনার সাথে কাজ করে এমন একজন পেশাজীবীকে জিজ্ঞেস করুন অথবা নিচের ওয়েবসাইটে এটি পাবেন।

如果這是您的母語，家庭指南有這種語言的版本。
向跟您一起的專家索取一份您母語版本的指南，或者到以下網站查看。

Si le français est votre langue maternelle, la version traduite du Guide des familles dans cette langue est disponible.
Prière de demander au membre du personnel qui vous épaule, la version traduite de ce guide dans votre langue maternelle ou consultez-la sur le site internet indiqué ci-après.

Si w ap li sa a nan lang Kreyòl, Gid pou Fanmi an disponib an Kreyòl.
Mande pwofesyonèl k ap travay avèk ou a pou ba w yon kopi, oswa ale sou sitwèb ki pi ba a pou jwenn Gid la nan lang Kreyòl.

이것이 귀하의 모국어라면, 가정 안내서가 한국어로 준비되어 있습니다.
함께 일하는 전문가에게 한국어 번역본에 대해 문의하시거나 아래 웹사이트에서 검색해 보십시오.

Это Руководство для родителей переведено на русский язык.
Обращайтесь к специалисту, работающему с ребенком, или на нижеуказанный веб-сайт.

Si este es su idioma natal, la guía familiar está disponible en este idioma.
Pida un ejemplar en su idioma al profesional que lo está ayudando, o búsquela en el sitio web a continuación.

اگر یہ آپکی آبائی زبان ہے، اہلِ خانہ کے لیے رہنمائی کتابچہ اس زبان میں دستیاب ہے۔
آپ جس پیشہ ور کے ساتھ کام کررہے ہیں ان سے اپنی آبائی زبان میں ایک کاپی کی درخواست کریں یا ذیل کی ویب سائٹ سے حاصل کریں۔

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Εάν αυτή είναι η μητρική σας γλώσσα, ο οικογενειακός οδηγός δεν είναι διαθέσιμος σε αυτή τη γλώσσα αυτή τη χρονική στιγμή.
Ζητήστε βοήθεια από τον επαγγελματία με τον οποίο συνεργάζεστε.

מדריך המשפחה אינו זמין בשלב זה בשפה המבוקשת.
במידה וזו אינה שפת האם שלך אנא בקש סיוע מאיש המקצוע שעובד עימך.

यदि यह आपकी मूल भाषा है, तो इस समय इस भाषा में परिवार गाइड उपलब्ध नहीं है।
मदद के लिए उस पेशेवर से पूछें जिसके साथ आप काम कर रहे हैं

これがあなたの母国語である場合、現時点ではこの言語でファミリーガイドを利用できません。
専門の担当者にご相談ください。

यदि यो तपाईंको मातृ भाषा हो भने यस समयमा परिवार निर्देशिका यो भाषाको लागि उपलब्ध छैन।
सहयोगको लागि आफूले काम गर्ने पेशेवर व्यक्तिसँग सोध्नुहोस्।

Jeśli to Twój język ojczysty, przewodnik rodzinny nie jest obecnie dostępny w tym języku.
Poproś o pomoc specjalistę, z którym współpracujesz.

Se este for seu idioma materno, o guia familiar não está disponível em sua língua no momento.
Peça ajuda ao profissional que está trabalhando com você.

ਜੇ ਇਹ ਤੁਹਾਡੀ ਮਾਤ-ਭਾਸ਼ਾ ਹੈ, ਤਾਂ ਇਸ ਸਮੇਂ ਇਸ ਭਾਸ਼ਾ ਵਿੱਚ ਫੈਮਿਲੀ ਗਾਈਡ ਉਪਲਬਧ ਨਹੀਂ ਹੈ।
ਆਪਣੇ ਨਾਲ ਕੰਮ ਕਰ ਰਹੇ ਪੇਸ਼ੇਵਰ ਨੂੰ ਮਦਦ ਲਈ ਕਹੋ।

Ak je Váš rodný jazyk tento, potom v súčastnosti nie je rodinná príručka prístupná vo Vašom jazyku.
O pomoc požiadajte odborného pracovníka, s ktorým pracujete.

གལ་ཏེ་འདི་ཁྱེད་ཀྱི་ཡ་སྐད་མ་ཡིན་ |ད་ལྟ་ཁྱེམས་ཚང་གི་སྐད་ཡིག་གི་སྟེ་ནས་པ་བེད་སྤྱོད་མེ་འདུག
ཁྱེད་ཀྱིས་རོགས་རམ་བྱེད་བཞིན་མཉམ་དུ་ལས་ཀ་བྱེད་པའི་ཚེད་ལས་མི་ཡ་འདྲི་རོགས་གནོང་ |

Якщо це ваша рідна мова, то на цей час посібник для родини цією мовою недоступний.
Зверніться за допомогою до професіонала, який з вами працює.

אויב דאס איז אייער ערשטע שפראך, איז דער פאמיליע וועגווייזער נישט אוועילעבל אין דעם שפראך אין די יעצטיגע צייט.
בעט דעם פראפעסיאנאל מיט וועמען איר ארבעט פאר הילף.



Family Guide to Special Education Services

FOR SCHOOL-AGE CHILDREN

For additional information, dial 718-935-2007
or visit www.schools.nyc.gov/specialeducation

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