



Appendix

Special Education Referral—Parent Overview

An Individualized Education Plan (IEP) is a legal document that provides academic support to students to grant them access to educational material throughout the school day. All US schools are mandated to abide by the program and service recommendations listed on the IEP. Students only have IEPs, for as long as they need them. Once they no longer have a need, they are “graduated” from their IEP.

Steps to Obtaining an IEP

1. The Dean of Student Support completes an initial referral form that the parent or guardian must sign to grant **consent** and express interest in getting their child referred for Special Education eligibility.
2. The Committee for Special Education social worker conducts a **social history** meeting with the parents and a **classroom observation** of the student to inform the preparation of a background report.
3. Evaluations are completed by therapists from the DOE. A school psychologist conducts a **psycho-educational evaluation** to determine how your child learns best. **Speech and Occupational Therapy evaluations** are also conducted as needed. A prescription from the pediatrician is required for all occupational evaluations.
4. Your student’s teacher will prepare a **Present Levels of Performance (PLOP)** report which will speak to your student’s strengths and areas of growth. Teachers will also write academic goals that target academic gaps.
5. An **initial IEP meeting** is held with the parent, school, and Committee for Special Education to review the evaluations, reports, and make recommendations for eligibility and services.

Several people can recommend a child for a Special Education referral such as their principal and parents. However, a referral made for a student to receive an Individualized Education Plan (IEP) must have the consent of the parent/guardian. A referral does not mean that your child will be ELIGIBLE for services. A student *might* be eligible for services if they have difficulty: thinking and learning, understanding and using language, independently toileting, eating, dressing, or have physical impairments. Students must meet one of the thirteen disability classifications in order to qualify for Special Education services. Students can qualify for either an academic program or related service only, or receive both supports.

13 Classifications for Special Education Qualification:

1. Autism	5. Hearing Impairment	10. Orthopedic Impairment
2. Blindness	6. Specific Learning Disability	11. Traumatic Brain Injury
3. Deafness	7. Speech or Language Impairment	12. Visual Impairment
4. Emotional Disturbance	8. Intellectual Disability	13. Other Health Impairment
	9. Multiple Disabilities	

Individualized Education Plan (IEPs) Academic and Related Services Available

- Academic Programs: Special Education Teacher Support Services (SETSS), Integrated Co-Teaching (ICT), Special Class Size (12:1:1, 8:1:1, 6:1:1) *
- Related Services: Counseling, Speech and Language Therapy, Occupational Therapy, Physical Therapy, Hearing Education Services, Paraprofessional (Health or Crisis)
- Testing Accommodations
- Specialized Transportation



Academic Programs

- Special Education Teacher Support Services (SETSS): These services help your child stay in the general education classroom while receiving services from a special education teacher. The special education teacher works with your child outside of the classroom individually or with a small group for 30 minutes.
- Integrated Co-Teaching (ICT): ICT classrooms are comprised of 60% of students who are in general education and up to 40% of students who receive special education supports, one general education teacher, and one special education teacher. In this setting, children with IEPs are pulled into small groups whenever needed.
- Special Class Size: A special education class that has a maximum number of students (6, 8, or 12), with one certified special education teacher and one or more teaching assistants. These classroom sizes are typically reserved for students that require specific and tailored intellectual or behavioral support.

Related Services

Related Services are additional supports provided to students to advance their development and success in the school setting. The fundamental objective of related services is to help maximize each student's ability to achieve his or her educational goals.

- Counseling: confidential meetings that allow students to receive support needed for academic and socio-emotional development, provided by the School Social Worker.
- Speech Therapy: develops linguistic proficiency such as phonemic awareness, grammar, syntax, pragmatics, and discourse skills.
- Occupational Therapy: strengthens a student's fine motor skills, sensory integration or graphomotor coordination with activities i.e. handwriting, tracing, texture tolerance, manipulation of small objects
- Physical Therapy: emphasizes physical function and independence in the classroom and other school areas by developing manual/handling techniques, gross motor and neuromotor development, etc.
- Hearing Education: assists in auditory learning, speech-reading, receptive and expressive language development, and the use of hearing aids and assistive technology devices.
- Paraprofessionals: support students with significant behavior or health concerns by reinforcing targeted behavior and offering incentives and rewards.

IEP Meeting Types

- Initial Meeting: Occurs when a student has been referred for Special Education and determines, after review of evaluations and documents, whether or not a student is eligible for Special Education.
- Annual Meeting: Every year, the Committee for Special Education, the school, and the parents meet to discuss the student's progress towards achieving their goals listed on their IEP. Services can be discontinued, based on student progress or proficiency, during these meetings but cannot be added.
- Triennial Meeting: This meeting happens every three years to determine if a student still qualifies for the Special Education services that they were initially mandated based off of their disability classification.
- Reconvene/Re-Evaluation: These meetings are held if the parent wants to add new services to the IEP. These meetings, held upon the request of the parent, often require additional testing and evaluations.

**For more information feel free to access the Special Education Services:
A Parent Guide at the website below: <https://www.schools.nyc.gov/special-education>**