



**ADVOCATES FOR  
CHILDREN'S**

# **TURNING 5:**

A GUIDE TO THE TRANSITION  
FROM PRESCHOOL SPECIAL  
EDUCATION TO KINDERGARTEN



October 2011

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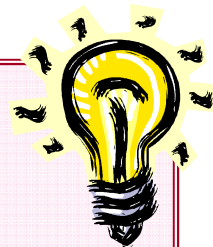
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This guide does not constitute legal advice. This guide attempts to summarize existing policies or laws without stating the opinion of AFC. If you have a legal problem, please contact an attorney or advocate.

## A BRIEF OVERVIEW OF THE PROCESS

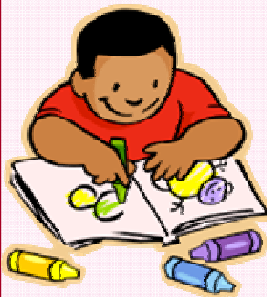


Two years ago, the NYC Department of Education (DOE) began a special education reform to include more children with disabilities in the schools they would attend if they did not have Individualized Education Programs (IEPs). Beginning with the 2012-2013 school year, all community (zoned) schools will be expected to serve the vast majority of students with disabilities. Therefore, there will be a major change in the kindergarten placement process for students with IEPs.

**Prior to the Individualized Education Program (IEP) Meeting:** If your child is receiving preschool special education services and will be turning five years old by December 31<sup>st</sup> of the following school year, you should receive a letter between December and February informing you that the Committee on Preschool Special Education (CPSE) has referred your child to the Committee on Special Education (CSE) for school-aged children. A representative from the Department of Education (DOE) will be in charge of your child's transition. This representative is usually a school psychologist or social worker at a local public school or at the CSE. The DOE will collect progress reports from your child's preschool special education program and related service providers. Usually, the DOE representative does a classroom observation of your child and determines whether or not to perform new evaluations.

**IEP Meeting:** The DOE will hold a "turning 5" IEP meeting for your child. Most meetings take place in March through May before your child enters kindergarten. If your child is eligible for kindergarten special education services, the IEP team will complete a new IEP for your child's kindergarten services. The IEP will include a classification of disability for your child, a program recommendation (types of kindergarten classes), related services, and goals. At the IEP meeting, the team will also decide whether your child will attend a community school or a "specialized" school.

**Placement:** If your child's IEP recommends classes and services at a community school, your child will most likely attend the school that accepts your child through the Kindergarten Admissions Process used for all students entering kindergarten. Therefore, it is important for you to participate in this process.



If your child's IEP recommends a specialized school, the DOE's Office of Student Enrollment (OSE) will send you a placement offer after your child's turning 5 IEP meeting.

You have the right to visit the school to determine if it is appropriate for your child.

# ELIGIBILITY

## 1. When will my child enter kindergarten?

In New York City, all children who will turn five years old by December 31, 2012 are eligible for kindergarten in September of 2012. Beginning in September of the calendar year when your child turns five years old, the Department of Education will offer *kindergarten* special education services if your child is eligible. Your child will no longer be eligible to receive services through the Committee on Preschool Special Education (CPSE). CPSE services will end in June (if your child receives services for 10 months) or August (if your child receives services for 12 months). For information about maintaining preschool services, see question # 20 (p. 17).

## 2. Who is eligible for school-aged special education services?

During preschool, eligibility for special education services is based on a child's delay in one of the areas of functioning (cognitive, language and communicative, adaptive, socioemotional, or motor development), and every preschooler receiving special education services is classified as a "preschool student with a disability." For a school-aged child to receive special education services, the IEP team must find the child eligible for one of the thirteen classifications of disability listed in the law. To be classified, the child's disability must affect his/her school performance. A classification for special education is not a medical diagnosis.

## 3. What classifications of disability are available?

The thirteen educational classifications of disability listed under the law are:

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

At your child's turning 5 IEP meeting, the IEP team will select one classification for your child if your child is eligible. Although more than one of the classifications may be appropriate, your child will receive one classification only. Services should meet your child's individual needs and should not be based solely on your child's classification. For more information about classifications, see pages 14-16 of the Department of Education's *Parent's Guide to Special Education Services for School-Age Children*, available at <http://schools.nyc.gov/Academics/SpecialEducation/ParentResources/default.htm>.

## ELIGIBILITY (continued)

### **4. If my child is not eligible for kindergarten special education services, are there any other services available for my child?**

Yes. If the IEP team finds that your child is not eligible for kindergarten special education services because your child does not meet any of the classifications of disability under the law, the IEP team will declassify your child and your child will not receive special education services in kindergarten. If the IEP team decides it is necessary, your child may still receive “transition services” to support your child’s transition to general education. These services can include, but are not limited to, instructional support, modifications, remediation, speech therapy, or counseling. When an IEP team recommends that a child be declassified (placed in general education with no special education services), the IEP team should state in writing what transition services, if any, your child will need in the general education kindergarten classroom. You should ask for transition services if you think your child needs them. If you disagree with the IEP team’s decision to declassify your child, you may request mediation or a hearing or make a complaint. See questions #43 (p. 28) and #44 (p. 29).



### **5. Can I end my child’s special education services for kindergarten?**

Yes. The law allows parents to end special education services for their children at any time. To end special education services, you should write a letter to the Committee on Special Education (CSE), and your child’s school if your child has already started attending, stating that you no longer want your child to get any IEP services. Your child will enter a general education class and will not receive any special education services. The Department of Education (DOE) will no longer perform evaluations or hold IEP meetings for your child. You will lose your right to challenge the DOE for its failure to provide your child with services. Your child will lose all protections for special education students in suspension hearings. If you end your child’s special education services and later change your mind, you may make a new referral and your child will be reevaluated. If you end your child’s services, your child’s records will still indicate that your child received preschool special education services.

### **6. Is kindergarten mandatory?**

In New York City, parents do not have to send their children to school until first grade (September of the calendar year your child turns six years old). However, if you would like your child to attend kindergarten, the DOE *must* provide a kindergarten placement.

## REFERRAL

### 7. How do I know if my child has been referred for kindergarten special education services?



If your child is receiving preschool special education services and will be turning five years old by December 31<sup>st</sup> of the following school year, you should receive a letter between December and February informing you that the Committee on Preschool Special Education (CPSE) has referred your child to the Committee on Special Education (CSE) for school-aged children. If you do not receive this letter, you should contact your child's preschool special education provider and your CSE before March 1<sup>st</sup>. See question #45 (p. 30) for CSE contact information.

### 8. What if my child is first referred for preschool special education services during the spring before my child enters kindergarten?

If your child is referred to the Committee on Preschool Special Education (CPSE) for the first time during the spring of your child's last year in preschool, we recommend that you send a separate referral letter directly to the Committee on Special Education (CSE). You may want to fax the request and keep the fax confirmation sheet, hand deliver the request and have the CSE stamp a copy for you with the date, or mail the letter return receipt requested so that you have proof of the date when the CSE received your request. The deadline by which the CSE must offer your child a kindergarten special education placement depends on the date of referral to the CSE. See question #32 (p. 22) for these timelines.



## EVALUATIONS

### 9. Is the Department of Education required to perform new evaluations prior to the turning 5 IEP meeting?

No. The Department of Education (DOE) must perform new evaluations every three years. While the DOE may choose to perform new evaluations prior to the turning 5 IEP meeting, it is *not* required to do so. The DOE should collect progress reports from your child's preschool special education teacher and providers, but these are not formal evaluations. In general, the DOE representative responsible for your child's turning 5 case will perform an observation of your child prior to the turning 5 IEP meeting, will review your child's file, and will decide whether or not to do additional evaluations. However, you may request new evaluations at any time. See question #10 (p. 8). If your child's most recent evaluations are more than a year old, you may want new evaluations during the turning 5 process to help ensure appropriate kindergarten services for your child.

## EVALUATIONS

### 10. Can I ask the Department of Education to perform new evaluations?

Yes. A parent can request evaluations at any time, and the school district must complete the testing. However, new testing can be done only once each year unless the parent and school district agree otherwise. You should make your request for new evaluations in writing to the Committee on Special Education (CSE) chairperson. For contact information, see question # 45 (p. 30). You may want to fax the request and keep the fax confirmation sheet, hand deliver the request and have the CSE stamp a copy for you with the date, or mail the letter return receipt requested so that you have proof of the date when the CSE received your request. When you learn which DOE representative will be in charge of your child's transition, you should give a copy of the letter to that person. The DOE must complete evaluations within the following timeframes:

<i>If request for reevaluation was received:</i>	<i>The evaluation must be completed by:</i>
Prior to March 1	June 1
After March 1, but before April 1	July 1
After April 1, but before May 10	August 1

If the DOE does not follow these timelines, you have the right to an independent evaluation paid for by the DOE.

### 11. What if I disagree with the Department of Education's evaluations?

You may ask the Department of Education (DOE) to pay for an independent evaluation or you may choose to pay for a private evaluation.

- A. **Independent evaluations:** The law says that a parent can ask the DOE to pay for an independent evaluation if the parent is not satisfied with the evaluation done by the DOE. You should make your request for an independent evaluation in writing to the CSE chairperson. For contact information, see question # 45 (p. 30). You may want to fax the request and keep the fax confirmation sheet, hand deliver the request and have the CSE stamp a copy for you with the date, or mail the letter return receipt requested so that you have proof of the date when the CSE received your request. You should also give the letter to the DOE representative in charge of your child's transition to kindergarten.

Once you request an independent evaluation, the DOE has two choices. The DOE can agree to pay for the independent evaluation or the DOE can disagree and request an impartial hearing to prove that the DOE evaluations were appropriate. If the DOE agrees to pay for the independent evaluation, it will give you an "assessment authorization" form, which allows you to find an evaluator at an approved amount of money set by the DOE. You must share the results of the evaluation with the DOE. If the DOE fails to respond within a reasonable period of time, you may request mediation or an impartial hearing to ask the DOE to pay for the evaluation. See question # 43 (p. 28).

- B. **Private evaluations:** Alternatively, you may choose to arrange and pay for a private evaluation. Sometimes you can use health insurance to pay for a private evaluation. You do not need to share the results of a private evaluation with the DOE. If you do give the private evaluation to the DOE, the DOE must consider the private evaluation. However, the DOE may disagree with the evaluation and use its own evaluation.



## PREPARING FOR THE TURNING 5 IEP MEETING

### 12. What can I do to prepare for the turning 5 IEP meeting?

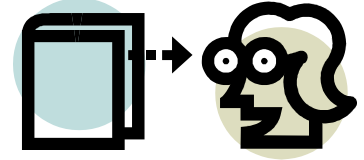
A. **Familiarize yourself with the process:**

- Attend a Department of Education (DOE) Kindergarten Orientation Meeting in the fall or winter. The schedule of Orientation Sessions will be posted at <http://schools.nyc.gov/Academics/SpecialEducation/ParentResources/Enrollment>.
- Consider reading some of the following documents:
  - The DOE's *Kindergarten: An Orientation Guide for Families of Students with Disabilities*, which will be available at <http://schools.nyc.gov/Academics/SpecialEducation/ParentResources/Enrollment>.
  - DOE Information re: Special Education Reform: [http://schools.nyc.gov/NR/rdonlyres/2BCCCCF14-9EAE-4506-BD3E-42E9789BCE99/87402/ParentLetter\\_FAQsChangesinSpecialEducation\\_090112.pdf](http://schools.nyc.gov/NR/rdonlyres/2BCCCCF14-9EAE-4506-BD3E-42E9789BCE99/87402/ParentLetter_FAQsChangesinSpecialEducation_090112.pdf) and <http://schools.nyc.gov/NR/rdonlyres/5990EE2F-BEFF-4D77-9AE7-D43EE0C6988D/0/April132010letterfromLauraRodriguezreSpecialEducationReform.pdf>.
  - The DOE's *Parent's Guide to Special Education Services for School-Age Children*, available at <http://schools.nyc.gov/Academics/SpecialEducation/ParentResources/default.htm>.
  - The DOE's *Standard Operating Procedures Manual: The Referral, Evaluation, and Placement of School-Age Students with Disabilities*, available at <http://schools.nyc.gov/Academics/SpecialEducation/EducatorResources/default.htm>.
  - The New York State Education Department's Procedural Safeguards Notice, available at <http://www.p12.nysed.gov/specialed/publications/policy/psgn109.htm>.

- B. **Request and review evaluations/progress reports:** You should consider whether your child needs new evaluations and, if so, request them from the DOE or get private evaluations. See questions #10 and #11 (p. 8). You should also make sure that all of your children's special education providers (e.g., teacher, SEIT, related service providers) complete turning 5 progress reports. Before the IEP meeting, you should get copies of all progress reports, evaluations, and classroom observations. You can get these from DOE representative who will lead your child's turning 5 IEP meeting, the CSE, or your child's preschool special education provider. DOE procedure states that you should receive any assessments or evaluations at least five days before an IEP meeting, but to make sure you receive them, you should ask for them in advance.

## PREPARING FOR THE TURNING 5 IEP MEETING (continued)

C. **Familiarize yourself with special education programs/ services:** You can find descriptions of the types of classes and services available in questions #17 (p. 12) and #18 (p. 15) or in the DOE's *Kindergarten: An Orientation Guide for Families of Students with Disabilities*. See question #12A (p. 9). Also, familiarize yourself with the DOE's special education reform. See question #12A (p. 9).



D. **Determine what program, services, and classification of disability may be appropriate for your child:** Speak with your child's teacher and service providers to see what they recommend, review evaluations and progress reports, and familiarize yourself with available classifications of disability, classes, and services. Keep in mind that the DOE can offer different types of settings for different parts of the day. For example, a child who needs additional support for reading can be in a small class for reading and in a general education class for the rest of the day.



**Note:** Think about whether the evaluations and progress reports support the services you are requesting. Be ready to use specific parts of the evaluations and progress reports to support what you are seeking or to argue why the evaluations are not accurate.

E. **Consider inviting people familiar with your child:** Although the DOE should invite your child's special education preschool teacher, SEIT, or provider to attend the IEP meeting, you should make sure that this individual knows about the meeting and plans to attend. You may consider inviting your child's other service providers, doctors, or anyone else who knows your child and may be able to assist in recommending an appropriate kindergarten class and services. A participant may participate via phone if s/he is not available in person. You can also invite someone to help support you and take notes.

F. **Make a list of supports and services your child needs on his/her IEP:** You are creating a brand new IEP and your child will likely attend a new school. Thus, it is important to think of all the supports, services, and information that the DOE should include on your child's IEP. You should think about your child's need for a wheelchair accessible (barrier free) placement, assistive technology, a paraprofessional, behavioral supports, a behavior intervention plan, transportation accommodations, health services, bilingual services, and 12 months of services (instead of 10 months). You may want to review the DOE's *Creating a Quality IEP* manual at <http://schools.nyc.gov/NR/rdonlyres/916F2D1C-8D46-4635-A988-45D9CC13F561/0/CreatingQualityIEP.pdf>, the DOE's *Continuum of Services* at <http://schools.nyc.gov/NR/rdonlyres/C7A58626-6637-42E7-AD00-70440820661D/0/ContinuumofServices.pdf>, and information about the DOE's special education reform. See questions #12A (p. 9) and #18 (p. 15).

## PREPARING FOR THE TURNING 5 IEP MEETING (continued)

### 13. Can I visit schools before the IEP meeting?

You may visit select schools at certain times. District 75 (the citywide district of specialized schools) holds open houses at several schools. When available, the schedule will be posted at <http://schools.nyc.gov/Academics/SpecialEducation/ParentResources/Enrollment>. The purpose of the open houses is to allow you to see an example of the types of classes available. There is no guarantee that your child can attend the school that you visit. If you are interested in visiting other schools, you may call the school's parent coordinator and try to arrange a visit. In addition, many community (zoned) schools and charter schools have open houses throughout the year. There is no guarantee that you can visit any particular school before the IEP meeting. After you receive a placement offer, you have a right to visit that school. See question #33 (p. 22).



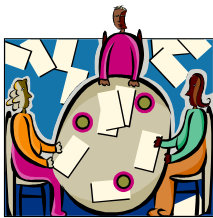
## TURNING 5 IEP MEETING

### 14. When will my child's turning 5 IEP meeting take place?

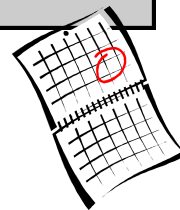
Most turning 5 IEP meetings take place between March and May.

### 15. What decisions will the IEP team make at the IEP meeting?

The IEP team will determine if your child is eligible for kindergarten special education services under one of the thirteen classifications of disability. See question #3 (p. 5). If your child is eligible for kindergarten special education services, the IEP team will complete a new IEP for your child's kindergarten services. The IEP will include a classification of disability for your child, a program recommendation (types of kindergarten classes), related services, goals, and descriptions of your child's performance, strengths, and needs. Any service or support that your child needs for school should be on your child's IEP. You should think about your child's need for a wheelchair accessible (barrier free) placement, assistive technology, a paraprofessional, behavioral supports, a behavior intervention plan, transportation accommodations, health services, bilingual services, and 12 months of services (instead of 10 months).



## TURNING 5 IEP MEETING (continued)



### 16. Who will attend my child's turning 5 IEP meeting?

The following people are required to attend the IEP meeting:

- You (the parent)
- Your child's special education teacher or service provider
- A general education teacher if your child may be in a general education kindergarten class
- A school psychologist who can explain the meaning of evaluations
- A district representative who is familiar with the educational resources available
- A parent member who is a parent of a child receiving special education services – unless you agree in writing to waive the parent member
- A language interpreter if you speak a language other than English

You may also invite anyone with knowledge of your child or someone to help support you and take notes. You should make sure that your child's special education teacher, SEIT, or provider plans to attend the meeting. You may consider inviting your child's other service providers, doctors, or anyone else who knows your child and may be able to assist in recommending appropriate kindergarten classes and services for your child. A participant may participate via phone if s/he is not available in person.

### 17. What types of kindergarten classes are available to children needing special education services?

A range of kindergarten classes is available to children needing special education services. The DOE must provide an appropriate education in the least restrictive environment, which means, as much as possible, a child with a disability should receive an education alongside non-disabled peers. A student with an IEP should only be removed from the general education setting when his/her disability is so severe that the child cannot progress even with the help of services and supports in a general education setting. The following classes are available for kindergarten. Each type of class may be used for part of the day or for the full day. For example, a child may need a small class for reading, but may be in a general education class for other subjects.

- A. **General education with supplementary aids and services:** Students are educated in a general education classroom with additional support. This additional support may include Special Education Teacher Support Services (SETSS), which is similar to resource room. See question #18 (p. 15).
- B. **Integrated Co-Teaching (ICT) (formerly known as Collaborative Team Teaching or CTT):** A class in which non-disabled students and students with disabilities learn together. Each class has a general education teacher and a special education teacher who work together throughout the day. This class is a *regular* size kindergarten class, which means it may have around 25 students.

## TURNING 5 IEP MEETING (continued)

- C. **Special class in a community school:** A self-contained class of special education students in a community (zoned) school. Students in this type of class are grouped by age and functioning level—not by classification of disability. Classes may contain students with the same disability or with different disabilities as long as they have similar levels of academic functioning, levels of social development, levels of physical development, and behavior management needs. The DOE offers 12:1 classes (12 students and one teacher) for students with academic and/or behavior management needs and 12:1:1 classes (12 students, one teacher, and one paraprofessional) for students with academic and/or behavioral management needs who require extra adult support and specialized instruction. Under the DOE’s special education reform, fewer children may be recommended for full-day special classes in community schools.



- D. **Special class in a specialized school (District 75):** District 75 is a separate school district intended for students who have severe needs that require greater structure and more intensive support. Some District 75 programs are located in schools consisting only of students with disabilities. Other District 75 programs are located in community schools, but the District 75 programs are run separately from the community school’s classes. For example, when you see a District 75 class located at “P. 4 @ P. 15,” P. 4 is the District 75 program located in P. 15, which is the community school. District 75 classes offer the following student-to-teacher ratios:
- i. **12:1:1** (12 students, one teacher, and one paraprofessional) for students with academic and/or behavioral management needs who require additional adult support and specialized instruction.
  - ii. **8:1:1** for students whose needs are severe and ongoing and who require constant, intensive supervision, a significant degree of individual attention, intervention, and intensive behavior management, as well as additional adult support.
  - iii. **6:1:1** for students with very significant needs, including academic, social, and/or interpersonal development, physical development, and management needs. Students’ behavior may be aggressive, self-abusive, or extremely withdrawn. Students may have severe difficulties with language and social skills. These students require very intense individual programming, continual adult supervision, a specialized behavior management program to engage in all tasks, and a program of speech/language therapy, which may include augmentative/alternative communication. While many autistic children participate in these classes, such classes are not appropriate for all children on the autism spectrum.

## TURNING 5 IEP MEETING (continued)

- iv. **12:1:4** for students with severe and multiple disabilities and limited language, academic, and independent functioning. This program primarily provides habilitation and treatment, including training in daily living skills and the development of communication skills.
- v. **Inclusion:** A small number of District 75 inclusion programs enable disabled students to participate in general education classes with supports from District 75. More information about District 75 inclusion programs is available at <http://schools.nyc.gov/Offices/District75/Departments/InclusiveEducation/default.htm> and <http://schools.nyc.gov/Offices/District75/DistrictInfo/FormsandFiles/D75Forms/default.htm#inclusion>.



- E. **State-Approved Non-Public School (NPS):** Private special education schools approved by the state for students whose educational needs cannot be met in a public school program. A list of these schools is available at <http://www.p12.nysed.gov/specialed/privateschools>. If the IEP team determines that no appropriate public school class exists for your child, the team will write “Defer to CBST” on your child’s IEP and will consult with the Central Based Support Team to identify an appropriate school. See question #40 (p. 25).
- F. **State-Approved Non-Public Residential School:** Children who require services on a 24-hour basis may receive a residential placement. Residential schools provide intensive programming in the classroom and a structured living environment on school grounds. This program is for children whose educational needs are so intensive that they require 24-hour intervention. If the IEP team determines that your child needs a residential placement, the team will write “Defer to CBST” on your child’s IEP and will consult with the Central Based Support Team to identify an appropriate school.
- G. **Home or hospital instruction:** These are educational services provided to children with disabilities who are unable to attend school for an extended period of time and need to receive instruction at home or in the hospital. They are typically temporarily provided until the student is able to return to school. These services may be appropriate for a child with severe medical or emotional problems that prevent him/her from attending school. The DOE sends home instructors to the hospital, home, or a public site for at least one hour per day. Although often used for students with medical needs, it can serve as a short-term solution when a student is waiting for a specialized placement. The IEP team should determine the number of hours, length of sessions, and number of times per week the service will be provided based on your child’s individual needs.

## TURNING 5 IEP MEETING (continued)

- H. **ASD Nest Program:** The ASD Nest Program is the DOE's Integrated Co-Teaching program for higher functioning children with autism spectrum disorders (ASD). Kindergarten classes serve four children with ASDs and eight typically developing children. Each class has two teachers. The ASD Nest Program has very limited spaces and evaluates children to determine whether or not they are appropriate for the program. The DOE also has a program for children on the autism spectrum called the ASD Horizon program. More information about these programs is available at <http://schools.nyc.gov/Academics/SpecialEducation/ParentResources/2010ASD.htm>. You may also contact your CSE.. See question #45 (p. 30).

### 18. What types of special education services and supports are available for kindergarten?


The services and supports available include, but are not limited to, those listed below. The IEP team should list all services and supports that your child needs on the turning 5 IEP. The IEP should list all related services including the number of times per week your child should receive the service, the length of the session, the group size, the language the service should be provided in, and whether the service will be provided in your child's classroom or in a separate room. You may want to review the DOE's *Creating a Quality IEP* manual at <http://schools.nyc.gov/NR/rdonlyres/916F2D1C-8D46-4635-A988-45D9CC13F561/0/CreatingQualityIEP.pdf> and the DOE's *Continuum of Services* at <http://schools.nyc.gov/NR/rdonlyres/C7A58626-6637-42E7-AD00-70440820661D/0/ContinuumofServices.pdf>.

- A. **Related services:** These include speech and language therapy, occupational therapy, physical therapy, counseling, orientation and mobility services, school health services, hearing services, and vision services, provided individually or in a small group.
- B. **Parent training:** This service teaches parents skills to help you meet your child's educational needs. In general, it should be provided to parents of children in 8:1:1, 6:1:1, and 12:1:4 classes.
- C. **Special Education Teacher Support Services (SETSS):** Formerly known as resource room. A special education teacher works with a small group of students for a portion of the day either outside of the classroom in a smaller class (pull-out) or inside the classroom (push-in). SETSS is mainly used for students in general education classrooms who need additional support for part of the day, but it can be provided to students in other classroom settings as well. When provided in a group setting, SETSS can include no more than eight children. The



## TURNING 5 IEP MEETING (continued)

SETSS teacher may also work indirectly with your child's general education teacher to adjust the learning environment and modify and adapt instructional methods to meet your child's individual needs. Your child's IEP must state the number of periods each day that your child will receive SETSS, the group size, where the service will be provided, and whether the service will be provided directly to your child and/or indirectly through the general education teacher.

- D. **Paraprofessionals:** An aide (not a teacher) assigned to work one-on-one with a student to meet individual management needs, such as behavior management, health, or toileting, or to provide interpretation services. Transportation paraprofessionals are also available if your child needs one on the bus.
- E. **Assistive Technology (AT):** Equipment and services to help your child move or communicate (e.g., a communication device, FM unit, computer access). Any assistive technology or services your child needs must be listed on his/her IEP. If you think your child needs assistive technology, you may request an assistive technology evaluation. The DOE's *Assistive Technology Guidebook* is available at <http://schools.nyc.gov/NR/rdonlyres/C275A4F4-A341-4638-A6D0-81FEE99A2401/0/ATGuidebook0809Finalcopy.pdf>. In addition to the assistive technology device, assistive technology services are available to help your child, your child's teachers, and yourself learn to use the device.
- 
- F. **Behavior Intervention Plans (BIPs) and supports:** For children whose behavior interferes with learning, the DOE should conduct a Functional Behavioral Assessment (FBA) to identify when the child misbehaves and what types of behavior the child is exhibiting. The FBA generally results in the development of a Behavior Intervention Plan (BIP). The BIP describes the strategies that the school should use to help the child change his/her behavior. If your child has behavioral challenges, you should make sure that the IEP team creates a BIP with sufficient detail to give guidance to your child's new school in how to manage your child's behavior. The IEP team should attach the BIP to your child's turning 5 IEP.
- G. **Curriculum accommodations or modifications:** These may include the use of audiotapes instead of books, large print books, Braille materials, the use of a calculator for math, the use of a word processor instead of handwriting, or redesigning the size or focus of the assignment.
- H. **Individualized supports:** These include rephrasing of questions and instructions, special seating arrangements, testing accommodations, curricular aids such as highlighted reading materials, main idea summaries, or organizational aids.
- I. **Bilingual services:** If your child speaks a language other than English, the IEP team should consider whether or not your child needs a bilingual class or bilingual services.

## TURNING 5 IEP MEETING (continued)

### 19. Are home-based services available for kindergarten?

The Department of Education (DOE) must provide your child with an appropriate education that allows your child to make adequate progress in the least restrictive environment. In general, the DOE provides all services and supports *at school* for school-aged children and will not recommend home-based services on your child's turning 5 IEP.

If your child received school-based services *and* home-based services during preschool and needs the combination of school-based and home-based services in order to make adequate progress in school, your child may be entitled to continue receiving school-based and home-based services. You should request these services during your turning 5 IEP meeting and ask the DOE to recommend home-based services on your child's IEP. For example, some autistic children need school-based and home-based services, such as a teacher to provide Applied Behavioral Analysis (ABA) therapy, to generalize skills, avoid engaging in repetitive behaviors, and make adequate progress. It is advisable to bring an evaluation or professional to the IEP meeting to explain why your child needs school-based and home-based services. If the DOE eliminates your child's home-based services for kindergarten and your child needs these services, you can request an impartial hearing. It is often advisable to consult an attorney or advocate. See question #43 (p. 28).

As a practical matter, some schools do not have enough service providers to provide IEP services to all children needing them at school. In September, if the school cannot provide your child with the related services or Special Education Teacher Support Services (SETSS) on your child's IEP at school, the DOE must provide you with a voucher so you can obtain these services from a provider outside of school at DOE expense. See question #42 (p. 27).

### 20. Can my child remain in his/her preschool program for another year?

The Department of Education (DOE) must provide your child with an appropriate education that allows your child to make adequate progress in the least restrictive environment. The DOE will try to provide an appropriate education in a kindergarten setting. If you believe that it would be appropriate for your child to remain in his/her current setting and inappropriate for your child to be in a kindergarten class, you should explain this at your child's turning 5 IEP meeting. It is advisable to bring an evaluation or professional to the IEP meeting to explain why your child needs to remain in preschool for another year. If the DOE disagrees, you can request an impartial hearing. In addition, if your child attends a private preschool program, the preschool must be



## TURNING 5 IEP MEETING (continued)

willing to have your child remain in the preschool program. At the hearing, the hearing officer will decide whether or not the DOE has failed to offer your child an appropriate kindergarten program and whether or not it would be appropriate for your child to remain in his/her current program. Since these are difficult cases, it is often advisable that you consult an advocate or attorney. During the hearing, generally, your child has the right to continue receiving his/her preschool services, but you should consult an attorney about your individual case. See question #43 (p. 28).

### 21. Is transportation available for my child?

Transportation is available if the Department of Education (DOE) determines that your child needs it because of your child's disability and individual needs. Bus transportation is a service listed on a child's IEP. If your child has any special transportation requirements (e.g., air-conditioning, time limits for the bus ride, or a wheelchair lift bus), the IEP team should list these requirements on the IEP.

You should provide written documentation from a doctor indicating your child's transportation needs. The DOE has a form that your child's doctor should complete to request special transportation, and you will need to complete a form to allow the DOE's doctor to speak with your child's doctor. These forms are available from the CSE or the DOE representative in charge of your child's case or on pages 264-266 of the DOE's *Standard Operating Procedures Manual*, available at <http://schools.nyc.gov/Academics/SpecialEducation/EducatorResources/default.htm>.

If your child is not eligible for transportation as a special education service, your child may be eligible for regular transportation depending on the distance to your child's school and whether or not your child is attending a school in the district where you live. Eligibility requirements are available on the Office of Pupil Transportation's Web site at <http://schools.nyc.gov/Offices/Transportation/ParentResources/GeneralEducationEligibility/default.htm>.



## TURNING 5 IEP MEETING (continued)

### **22. What if I was not notified and a turning 5 IEP meeting took place without me?**

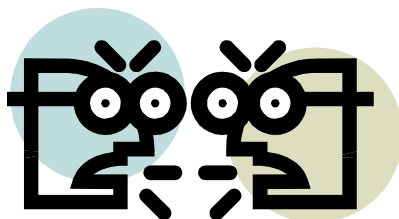
You have a legal right to participate in IEP meetings regarding your child. If the turning 5 IEP meeting took place without you and you would like to participate in the meeting, you should write a letter to the DOE representative in charge of your child's transition and to the Committee on Special Education (CSE) chairperson requesting a new IEP meeting so that you can participate. For CSE contact information, see question #45 (p. 30). You may want to fax the request and keep the fax confirmation sheet, hand deliver the request and have the CSE stamp a copy for you with the date, or mail the letter return receipt requested so that you have proof of the date when the DOE received your request.

### **23. What if the DOE has asked to do a second turning 5 IEP meeting?**

Sometimes the DOE asks to do a second turning 5 IEP meeting. If you agree with the IEP from the first turning 5 IEP meeting but the DOE has asked to meet again, you should find out why. If you disagree with the change the DOE is proposing, you should say that you are not agreeing to that change. If the DOE insists on holding the second meeting, you should participate because the meeting could go forward without you if you do not participate. You should prepare to argue against the proposed change. You can bring documentation and can bring anyone you want who will help you explain why you disagree. After the meeting, you may request mediation or an impartial hearing or make a complaint. See questions #43 (p. 28) and #44 (p. 29).

### **24. What if I disagree with the classification, services, or program recommendation on the turning 5 IEP?**

The DOE must provide your child with an appropriate education in the least restrictive environment. If you think that the DOE gave your child an incorrect classification of disability or believe that the services or program recommendation on your child's IEP will not provide your child with an appropriate education that will allow your child to make adequate progress, you can request a new IEP meeting. You can also request mediation or an impartial hearing or make a complaint. See questions #43 (p. 28) and #44 (p. 29).



## PLACEMENT

### **25. How will my child receive a kindergarten placement for a community school program?**

Beginning in the 2012-2013 school year, all community (zoned) schools will be expected to serve the vast majority of students with disabilities. Therefore, most children recommended to receive special education classes or services in community schools will attend the school that accepts them through the Kindergarten Admissions Process. Parents of all students entering kindergarten, *including parents of students with disabilities*, should participate in the Kindergarten Admissions Process to reserve a seat in a community school. You cannot apply to District 75 (specialized) schools through the Kindergarten Admissions Process. See question #31 (p. 21). For information about charter school placements, see questions #37 and #38 (p. 24).

### **26. How does the Kindergarten Admissions Process work?**

Information about the Kindergarten Admissions Process will be available at <http://schools.nyc.gov/ChoicesEnrollment/Elementary/default.htm>. You may start applying to community schools in January by going to your zoned school and any other schools of interest and completing an intake application. Schools determine which children get a kindergarten seat based on the following list of priorities, listed from highest priority to lowest priority:

1. Zoned students who have a sibling who will be in grades 1-5 at that school in 2012-2013;
2. All other zoned students;
3. Students residing in the school's district but outside the school's zone, with a sibling who will be in grades 1-5 at that school in 2012-2013;
4. Student residing outside of the school's district with a sibling who will be in grades 1-5 at that school in 2012-2013;
5. All other students residing in the school's district but outside the school's zone;
6. All other students.

It is highly recommended that you apply to your zoned school since that is where your child will have priority. You can call 311 to determine your zoned school. In March, schools inform parents which children they have accepted. In April, parents must register their children.

### **27. What if the school that accepts my child through the Kindergarten Admissions Process cannot implement my child's IEP?**

All community schools will be expected to serve all students with community school recommendations who are accepted to the school. If the school that accepts your child cannot provide your child with an appropriate education, you should write a letter explaining your concerns and asking the DOE's Office of Student Enrollment to issue a different placement offer. If the DOE does not give you another placement offer, you can request mediation or an impartial hearing or make a complaint. See questions #34 (p. 23), #43 (p. 28) and #44 (p. 29).

## PLACEMENT (continued)

### **28. What if my child was not accepted to any school through the Kindergarten Admissions Process?**

The DOE must provide an appropriate placement to your child. If your child was not accepted to any school through the Kindergarten Admissions Process, the DOE must send you a placement offer.

### **29. What if my child needs a wheelchair accessible community school?**

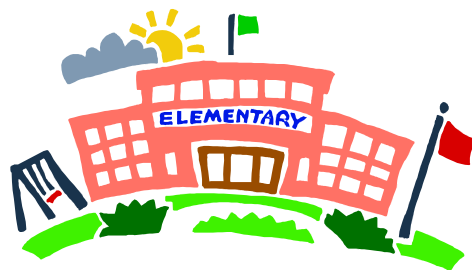
A list of wheelchair accessible (barrier free) schools is available at <http://schools.nyc.gov/Academics/SpecialEducation/ParentResources/default.htm>. You should apply to these schools through the Kindergarten Admissions Process. If your child is not accepted to an accessible school, the DOE's Office of Student Enrollment must offer you an accessible school.

### **30. If my child will likely need a special class in a specialized school (District 75), should I participate in the Kindergarten Admissions Process?**

All parents of students entering kindergarten have the right to participate in the Kindergarten Admissions Process. However, it will only reserve your child a seat in a community school. The process begins in January before your child's turning 5 IEP meeting and before you know which setting the IEP team recommends. If you are certain your child will need a special class in a specialized school (District 75) because of your child's significant needs, you may decide not to participate in the Kindergarten Admissions Process. If you are not sure, you should participate in the Kindergarten Admissions Process to be safe.

### **31. How will my child receive a kindergarten placement for a special class in a specialized school (District 75)?**

If your child's kindergarten IEP recommends a special class in a specialized school (District 75), the DOE's Office of Student Enrollment will send you a letter with your child's school. You may state school preferences during the IEP meeting, and the DOE representative should pass along your preferences to the Office of Student Enrollment.



## PLACEMENT (continued)

### 32. When will my child receive a placement?



If a referral for special education services is received:

- Before March 1<sup>st</sup>, the DOE must offer an appropriate placement by June 15<sup>th</sup>
- After March 1<sup>st</sup>, but before April 1<sup>st</sup>, the DOE must offer an appropriate placement by July 15<sup>th</sup>
- After April 1<sup>st</sup>, but before May 10<sup>th</sup>, the DOE must offer an appropriate placement by August 15<sup>th</sup>
- After May 11<sup>th</sup>, the DOE must offer an appropriate placement within the compliance timelines for a regular referral (i.e., 60 school days)

This means that, if your child began receiving preschool special education services before March, you should receive a placement offer by June 15<sup>th</sup>. The placement offer is also called a Final Notice of Recommendation.

Please note that, if your child receives his/her placement through the Kindergarten Admissions Process, you will receive this placement in March. See question #26 (p. 20).

### 33. How can I tell if the proposed placement is appropriate?



The DOE must provide an appropriate placement for your child. To determine if the proposed placement can meet your child's individual needs, you may want to take the following steps:

- Research:** Find out as much information as you can from the DOE's Web site, <http://schools.nyc.gov>. Go to the school's Web site and click on "statistics" in the left hand margin to find reports about the school. You can also read reviews on Inside Schools' Web site, <http://www.insideschools.org>.
- Class profile:** You can ask the proposed school or placement officer listed on the placement offer for the "class profile" for your child's proposed class. Without stating children's names, the class profile should list the ages, grades, classifications of disability, and functioning levels of the children in the proposed class.
- School visit:** You should visit the proposed class to figure out if it can meet your child's individual needs. Even if you are familiar with the proposed school, it is important that you see the class for yourself.
  - Ask to speak with teacher of the class and show him/her your child's IEP and evaluations
  - Ask the school administrators and teachers how that class and school will be able to meet the recommendations, services, and goals on your child's turning 5 IEP
  - Look at the specific classroom where your child's class will be and observe the current class to assess whether or not you think it is appropriate for your child
  - Ask about the class structure, schedule, materials, instructional methods, and behavioral techniques used

## PLACEMENT (continued)

- Ask about the teacher’s qualifications and experience
- Ask about the availability of related services (like speech therapy) at the school and look at the space where the school provides related services
- Ask the administrators, teachers, and therapists about any specific concerns you have

**Note:** The teachers, providers, classrooms, and classes may change by September. You may want to visit the school again in September to make sure that it can meet your child’s



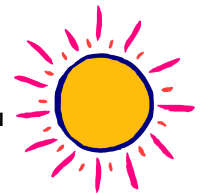
### 34. What if the proposed placement is inappropriate for my child?

The DOE must provide an *appropriate* placement that allows your child to make adequate progress. However, there is no right to “the best placement” and no right to any particular school. It is advisable to visit the proposed placement and consider it even if you do not think it would be a good fit for your child. See question #33 (p. 22). After you visit the school, if you do not feel it is appropriate for your child, you should write a letter to the placement officer explaining why the proposed placement would not meet your child’s individual educational needs. The placement officer’s contact information will be on your placement offer letter. You may want to fax the letter and keep the fax confirmation sheet, hand deliver the request and have the office stamp a copy for you with the date, or mail the letter return receipt requested so that you have proof of the date when the placement office received your request. You may want to call the placement officer as well and see if there are other schools available. If you have another public school in mind, you can ask the placement officer if there is a seat available in that school. However, if the DOE believes the first placement is appropriate, there is *no guarantee* that the DOE will offer you a different placement.

If the DOE does not offer you an appropriate placement and the proposed school would not provide your child with an appropriate education, you may request mediation or an impartial hearing or make a complaint. See questions #43 (p. 28) and #44 (p. 29).

### 35. How can I visit a school if I do not receive a placement offer until the summer?

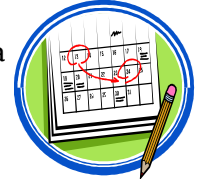
Most District 75 (specialized school) programs and some community schools are open during the summer. If the proposed school placement is closed during the summer, you may want to write a letter to the placement officer to let him/her know that you will need to see the proposed class during the first week of school before deciding whether or not to accept the placement.



## PLACEMENT (continued)

### 36. What if the DOE does not propose a kindergarten placement for my child by June 15th (or the appropriate deadline)?

If your child received preschool special education services and the DOE recommends a self-contained *special class* for kindergarten on your child's turning 5 IEP but fails to offer a placement by June 15<sup>th</sup> (or the appropriate deadline listed in question #32—p. 22), you may be entitled to receive a Nickerson (P-I) letter. A Nickerson letter requires the DOE to pay tuition for the school year for any state-approved special education non-public school that accepts your child. See question #40B (p. 26).



If the DOE does not have a placement for your child by June 15<sup>th</sup>, the DOE should send you a Nickerson letter. If you do not receive a placement offer or a Nickerson letter, you can request a Nickerson letter through the placement office. You can call the Committee on Special Education (CSE) and ask for the Office of Student Enrollment or placement office. You should write a letter as well to the CSE chairperson stating that you did not receive a placement and are requesting a Nickerson letter. For contact information, see question #45 (p. 30). You may want to fax the request and keep the fax confirmation sheet, hand deliver the request and have the CSE stamp a copy for you with the date, or mail the letter return receipt requested so that you have proof of the date when the CSE received your request.

If the DOE fails to propose a kindergarten placement and you want the DOE to offer a public school placement for your child, you should call or visit your Office of Student Enrollment. You can call the CSE and ask for the placement office.

### 37. Can I participate in the lottery for charter schools?

Yes. Students with disabilities have the right to participate in the lottery for any charter school. Charter schools may not discriminate against students on the basis of their disabilities. In fact, under a new law, charter schools must enroll a percentage of children with special needs. A list of charter schools is available at <http://schools.nyc.gov/community/planning/charters/default.htm>.



### 38. Do students with IEPs attending charter schools have the right to receive IEP services?

Yes. If your child is accepted to a charter school, the charter school must ensure that your child receives the programs and services on his/her IEP. If the charter school offers programs and services that would be appropriate to meet your child's needs, but do not match your child's turning 5 IEP, the charter school should ask the CSE to hold a new IEP meeting. At the meeting, the IEP team can consider changing your child's IEP to recommend any appropriate programs and services that the charter school offers. For more information about charter schools, see *Advocates for Children's Charter School Fact Sheets* at <http://www.advocatesforchildren.org/brochures.php>.

## PLACEMENT (continued)

### **39. If I pay for my child to attend private or parochial school, will the DOE provide related services?**

If you choose to pay for your child to attend a private school in New York City, the DOE may provide related services to your child. You must request special education services in writing to the Committee on Special Education (CSE) by June 1<sup>st</sup> before the school year for which you want services. The CSE will work with you to develop an Individualized Education Services Plan (IESP), which will take the place of the IEP. The DOE will contract with service providers to provide the services on your child's IESP at your child's private school or will give you a Related Services Authorization (RSA) so that providers can work with your child outside of school. See question #42 (p. 27). For more information, see Section 11 of the DOE's *Standard Operating Procedures Manual*, available at <http://schools.nyc.gov/Academics/SpecialEducation/EducatorResources/default.htm>.

### **40. When does the DOE pay for private school?**

There are three ways that the DOE will pay for an appropriate special education private school when it has not provided an appropriate public school placement: 1) non-public school recommendations, 2) Nickerson letters, and 3) payment through a hearing. The first two ways apply to *state-approved* special education non-public schools only. Not all private schools are state-approved. A list of the state-approved non-public schools is online at <http://www.p12.nysed.gov/specialed/privateschools>.

- A. **Non-Public School (NPS) recommendation:** The DOE may decide that the public school system has no appropriate program for your child. In this case, the DOE will make an IEP recommendation called "defer to the Central Based Support Team (CBST)." The CBST is a DOE office that matches state-approved non-public schools with students. If you believe that the public school system has no appropriate program for your child, you may ask the DOE at your turning 5 IEP meeting to make a recommendation for placement at a non-public school. If you have found a non-public school that has accepted your child before the turning 5 IEP meeting, you should bring the acceptance letter to the turning 5 meeting and discuss how this school would meet your child's needs in a way that a public school could not. If the IEP team agrees, it will recommend "defer to CBST" on your child's IEP and send the IEP to the CBST. If the CBST agrees that your child needs a non-public school placement, a CBST case manager will apply to non-public schools for you. If a non-public school has already accepted your child, you should let the IEP team and CBST know. If the CBST disagrees with the "defer to CBST" recommendation, it will return your child's case to the IEP team. If the IEP team or the CBST disagrees with your request for a non-public school placement, you may request an impartial hearing. See questions #40C (p. 26) and #43 (p. 28).

## PLACEMENT (continued)

- B. **Nickerson (P-I) letters:** If your child is recommended for a self-contained special education class for kindergarten and the DOE fails to offer a placement by June 15<sup>th</sup> or the appropriate deadline listed in question #32 (p. 22), you may be entitled to receive a Nickerson (P-I) letter. A Nickerson letter requires the DOE to pay tuition for the school year for any state-approved special education non-public school (NPS) that accepts your child. To use the letter, you must find a school on the list of state-approved non-public schools that is appropriate and will accept your child. When you call schools, you should tell them that you have a Nickerson letter. If your Nickerson letter has an expiration date, you can still use it after it expires if the DOE has not made a placement offer. Due to the limited number of NPSs, getting this letter does not guarantee you will be able to find a school for your child. If you do not find an NPS or do not want to send your child to an NPS, the DOE still must provide an appropriate public school placement.
- C. **Payment through a hearing:** If the DOE failed to provide your child with an appropriate educational program or placement, you may be able to win payment for tuition at a private special education day school or private residential school (including schools that are state-approved and schools that are not state-approved). To obtain tuition payment this way, you will need to file for an impartial hearing. In order to win tuition, the hearing officer will have to find that: (1) the DOE failed to provide your child with an appropriate education, (2) the school you have chosen is appropriate to address your child's special education needs, and (3) you have shown good faith and cooperated with the DOE. In order to win tuition payment through a hearing, there must be a private school that has an appropriate and available spot for your child. You can pay for the school and then file a hearing for reimbursement from the DOE or, if you can show that you cannot afford the tuition, you can file a hearing to ask the DOE to pay in advance. Through a hearing, you can win funding for private school tuition for one school year only. You would have to file a new hearing for the following school year. Since these can be difficult cases, it is advisable that you consult an advocate or attorney. See question #43 (p. 28).



## PLACEMENT (continued)

### 41. Can I apply for gifted and talented programs?

Yes. You have the right to apply for gifted and talented programs. Your child can receive special education related services and supports and participate in a gifted and talented class. Information about gifted and talented programs is available on the DOE's Web site: <http://schools.nyc.gov/Academics/GiftedandTalented/default.htm>.



## STARTING KINDERGARTEN

### 42. What if my child's school cannot provide the services or supports on my child's IEP?



Your child has the right to receive all of the services and supports on his/her IEP. If the school cannot provide the related services (such as speech, occupational, or physical therapy or counseling) or Special Education Teacher Support Services (SETSS) on your child's IEP, the DOE must provide you with a voucher so that you can obtain these services from a provider outside of school at DOE expense. This voucher is called a Related Services Authorization (RSA) for related services and a P-3 letter for SETSS. While many RSA providers provide the service at their offices, some will provide the service at your home.

You should check with your child's school in September to see whether or not the school can provide all of the services on your child's IEP at school. When you receive an RSA or P-3 letter, you should also receive a list of providers who accept RSAs and P-3 letters. Lists of providers are also available online at <http://schools.nyc.gov/Academics/SpecialEducation/ParentResources/Related+Services+Information.htm>. You may be eligible for reimbursement for transportation to the related service provider.

## COMPLAINTS, MEDIATION, IMPARTIAL HEARINGS

### 43. What is mediation? What is an impartial hearing? What is the difference?



- A. **Mediation** is a meeting between the parent, a DOE representative, and an outside neutral mediator to try to resolve disagreements. There is no requirement to do mediation. You can ask for an impartial hearing at any time, including before or after you have started the mediation process. The mediator is not a judge, but is trained to try to help the parties reach an agreement about their dispute. To request mediation, give your written request to the Committee on Special Education (CSE) and the local mediation center. A list of local mediation centers is available at <http://www.p12.nysed.gov/specialed/publications/policy/mediationbook.htm#cdrc>. Both sides must agree to participate in mediation. If both sides reach an agreement at mediation, the DOE and the parent must honor the agreement.

Mediation may be especially effective when you are seeking services at your child's school or a different public school placement. However, when you are seeking funding for a private school that is not state-approved (see question #40 (p. 25)), you should file for an impartial hearing because the DOE will not agree to fund such a private school through mediation.

- B. An **Impartial Hearing** is held before an Impartial Hearing Officer who acts as a judge for your case. The hearing officer is an independent decision-maker who is not a DOE employee. S/he has the authority to decide what solution is appropriate after hearing testimony and receiving evidence from both the parent and the school district. Because a hearing is a formal process, parents often bring an advocate or an attorney to represent them. A hearing officer's decision must be followed by both the DOE and the parent, unless either side appeals to the State Review Officer. For more information, you may want to read *Advocates for Children's Impartial Hearing Guide*, available at <http://www.advocatesforchildren.org/guides.php>.



The hearing process can take several months. During the process, your child has the right to “pendency.” Generally, this means that your child has the right to continue receiving the program and services on his/her preschool IEP until the hearing officer makes a final decision. If you want your child's preschool program and services to continue during the hearing process, you should ask the hearing officer for a “pendency order.” If the preschool program your child attended does not have a seat available for your child, you can discuss other “pendency placements” with the DOE, or, if you and the DOE do not agree, the hearing officer will decide.

## COMPLAINTS, MEDIATION, IMPARTIAL HEARINGS (continued)

### 44. How can I make a complaint?

You can call 311 and ask for the Special Education Call Center. The DOE's Special Education Call Center investigates and responds to complaints.

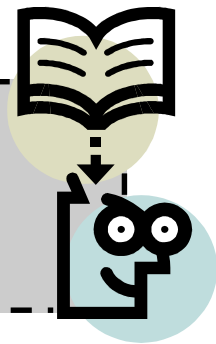


You also have the right to file an official state complaint with the New York State Education Department (NYSED) regarding any violation of special education law. For a sample state complaint form, go to: <http://www.p12.nysed.gov/specialed/publications/policy/covercomplaint.htm>.

If NYSED finds that the DOE violated your rights, it can tell the DOE to correct the violation, provide services, or award reimbursement.

You may also file a complaint concerning your child's rights to the U.S. Department of Education's Office of Civil Rights. Information is available at <http://www2.ed.gov/about/offices/list/ocr/complaintintro.html>.

To learn more about special education in New York City and impartial hearings, please see *Advocates for Children's Guide to Special Education and Guide to Impartial Hearings*, available on our Web site at <http://www.advocatesforchildren.org/guides.php>.



## CONTACT INFORMATION



### 45. How do I contact the Committee on Special Education (CSE)?


Region	Chairperson	Districts	Address	Phone/ Fax #
1	Rosetta BrownLee	7, 9, 10	One Fordham Plaza, 7 <sup>th</sup> Fl. Bronx, 10458	(718) 329-8001 Fax: (718) 741-7928
2	Michele Beatty	8, 11, 12	3450 E. Tremont Ave., 2 <sup>nd</sup> Fl. Bronx, 10465	(718) 794-7429 Fax: (718) 794-7445
3	Esther Morell	25, 26	30-48 Linden Pl. Flushing, 11354	(718) 281-3461 Fax: (718) 281-3478
		28, 29	90-27 Sutphin Blvd. Jamaica, 11435	(718) 557-2553 Fax: (718) 557-2620
4	Elissa Finkelstein (Acting Chair)	24, 30	28-11 Queens Plaza North, 5 <sup>th</sup> Fl. Long Island City, 11101	(718) 391-8405 Fax: (718) 391-8556
		27	Satellite Office 82-01 Rockaway Blvd., 2 <sup>nd</sup> Fl. Ozone Park, 11416	(718) 642-5715 Fax: (718) 642-5891
5	Mariama Sandi	19, 23, 32	1665 St. Marks Ave. Brooklyn, 11233	(718) 240-3558 Fax: (718) 240-3555
6	Arlene Rosenstock	17, 18, 22	5619 Flatlands Ave. Brooklyn, 11234	(718) 968-6200 Fax: (718) 968-6253
7	Claire Donnellan	31	715 Ocean Terrace, Bldg. A Staten Island, 10301	(718) 420-5790 Fax: (718) 420-5758
		20, 21	415 89 <sup>th</sup> St. Brooklyn, 11209	(718) 759-4983 Fax: (718) 759-3905
8	Deborah Cuffey- Jackson	13, 14, 15, 16	131 Livingston St., 4 <sup>th</sup> Fl. Brooklyn, 11201	(718) 935-4900 Fax (718) 935-5167
9	Gerard Donegan	1, 2, 4	333 7th Ave., 4 <sup>th</sup> Fl. New York, 10001	((917) 339-1600 Fax: (917) 339-1450
10	Mark Jacoby	3, 5, 6	388 W. 125 <sup>th</sup> St. New York, 10027	(212) 342-8300 Fax: (212) 342-8427

## CONTACT INFORMATION

### 46. What should I do if I have more questions?

You can call **Advocates for Children’s Helpline** from Monday through Thursday, 10:00a.m. to 4:00p.m., toll free at (866) 427-6033.

You can also contact the **Early Childhood Direction Centers (ECDCs)**, which provide information about services for young children, ages birth through five, who have delays or disabilities. You can call them to talk about any concerns you have about your child’s transition to kindergarten.

<b>Early Childhood Direction Centers (ECDCs)</b>	
<p><b>Bronx</b>                      Ana Cecilia Hernandez, Director                      2488 Grand Concourse, #337                      Bronx, New York 10458                      (718) 584-0658 - telephone                      (718) 584-0859 - fax  <a href="mailto:ecdcbronx@yahoo.com">ecdcbronx@yahoo.com</a></p>	<p><b>Brooklyn</b>                      Karen Samet, Director                      160 Lawrence Avenue                      Brooklyn, New York 11230                      (718) 437-3794 - telephone                      (718) 436-0071 - fax  <a href="mailto:ksamet@ucpnyc.org">ksamet@ucpnyc.org</a></p>
<p><b>Manhattan</b>                      Marilyn Rubinstein, Director                      New York Presbyterian Hospital                      435 East 70th Street - Suite 2A                      New York, New York 10021                      (212) 746-6175 - telephone                      (212) 746-8895 - fax  <a href="mailto:mrubinst@nyp.org">mrubinst@nyp.org</a></p>	<p><b>Queens</b>                      Catherine Warkala, Director                      Queens Centers for Progress                      82-25 164th Street                      Jamaica, New York 11432                      (718) 374-0002 ext. 465 - telephone                      (718) 969-9149 - fax  <a href="mailto:cwarkala@queenscp.org">cwarkala@queenscp.org</a></p>
<p><b>Staten Island</b>                      Laura Kennedy, Director                      Staten Island University Hospital                      242 Mason Avenue, 1<sup>st</sup> floor                      Staten Island, New York 10305                      (718) 226-6670 - telephone                      (718) 226-6385 - fax  <a href="mailto:lkennedy@siuh.edu">lkennedy@siuh.edu</a></p>	

## **Our Mission:**

*AFC promotes access to the best education New York can provide for all students, especially students of color and students from low-income backgrounds. We use uniquely integrated strategies to advance systemic reform, empower families and communities, and advocate for the educational rights of individual students.*

Still have more questions?

### **Please Call The Jill Chaifetz Education Helpline**

Monday through Thursday

10am to 4pm

**1-866-427-6033** (toll free)

### **Advocates for Children of New York, Inc.**

151 West 30th Street, 5th Floor

New York, NY 10001

(212) 947-9779 phone

(212) 947-9790 fax

email [info@advocatesforchildren.org](mailto:info@advocatesforchildren.org)

[www.advocatesforchildren.org](http://www.advocatesforchildren.org)