



# Information

**for Parents  
of Preschool Students  
with Disabilities  
AGES 3-5**



## What is Preschool Special Education?

The New York State Education Department (SED), Office of Vocational and Educational Services for Individuals with Disabilities (VESID) oversees a statewide preschool special education program with school districts, municipalities, approved providers and parents. Evaluations and specially planned individual or group instructional services or programs are provided to eligible children who have a disability that affects their learning. Funding for these special education programs and services is provided by municipalities and the State.



## How will I know if my preschool-age child needs special education?

### **The Referral**

If your child received early intervention services as an infant or toddler up to age three, and may still need special education, your service coordinator will assist you with transition planning and making a referral to the Committee on Preschool Special Education (CPSE).

If your preschool-age child (3-5 years old) did not receive early intervention services, but has some delays or lags in development such as difficulty in talking, moving around, thinking, or learning or is facing physical or behavioral challenges — you, or professionals who know your child, may make a referral to the chairperson of your school district's Committee on Preschool Special Education (CPSE) who will assist you in completing the referral process.

The CPSE must include: the parent of the child, a regular education teacher (if the child is or may be participating in the regular education environment), a special education teacher or related service provider, a representative of the local school district who serves as the chairperson of the CPSE, an individual who can interpret evaluation results, other individuals who have knowledge or special expertise about the child, an additional parent member (unless the parent(s) of the child request that this person not participate), and a licensed or certified professional from the Department of Health's Early Intervention Program (for a child in transition from the Early Intervention Program). A certified or licensed preschool representative from the municipality must be notified of scheduled meetings; however, the CPSE meetings can be held whether or not the municipal representative attends.

### **The Evaluation Process**

When your child is referred to the CPSE, you will be given a list of agencies approved by the State Education Department to provide preschool special education evaluations. You will be asked to select one of the

approved evaluators, then sign a consent form for your child to be evaluated at no cost to you or your family.

The CPSE will also give you a copy of the due process procedural safeguards notice. If your child's evaluation is not timely or, if you disagree with the evaluation results or the recommendation of the CPSE, you have the right to ask for an independent evaluation, mediation or an impartial hearing.

A copy of the evaluation report, including a summary of the evaluation, will be provided to you and to other CPSE members. You will be asked to meet with them to talk about the evaluation results.

If the CPSE finds your child is not eligible for special education programs and/or services, you will be given the reasons for the decision in writing.

*How will my child receive special education programs and services?*

## **The CPSE Recommendation and the Individual Education Program (IEP)**

If your child has a disability that may be affecting his or her learning, the CPSE will find your child to be an eligible "preschool student with a disability." The CPSE will also recommend the program or services to meet your child's individual needs and where they will be provided.

If your child is an eligible preschool student with a disability, you and the other CPSE members will write an Individualized Education Program (IEP) for your child that will list the recommended services to be provided, how often, and for how long. The recommendations will be forwarded to your local school district Board of Education for approval.

Most children with disabilities can receive the special education services they need in settings with their

nondisabled peers. They also should participate in developmentally appropriate activities. The CPSE must consider how to provide the services in the Least Restrictive Environment (LRE), where your child can learn close to your home with other children of the same age who do not have disabilities. Services may be provided at an approved or licensed pre-kindergarten or Head Start program, the work-site of a provider, the student's home, a hospital, a State facility or a child care location.



## What programs or services will my child receive?

If approved by the school district, arrangements will be made for your eligible child to receive one or more of the following special education programs and/or services recommended by the CPSE including, but not limited to:

### **Related Services**

- Speech Therapy (ST)
- Occupational Therapy (OT)
- Physical Therapy (PT)
- Assistive technology
- Parent education
- Counseling

### **Programs Approved by SED**

**Special Education Itinerant Teacher (SEIT)** - a special education teacher works with a child in a setting recommended by the CPSE.

**Special Class in an Integrated Setting (SC/IS)** - a class with preschool students with and without disabilities.

**Special Class (SC)** - a class with only children with disabilities.



*How will I know that my child is making progress?*

## **Progress Reports and the Annual Review**

- When you and the CPSE write your child's IEP, you will decide how and when you will be informed of your child's progress.
- Progress can be reported by regular phone calls from the teacher or service provider, notes and comments in a shared notebook or formal progress reports which tells how your child is progressing toward IEP goals and whether your child is expected to meet the goals on the IEP by the date planned. Progress reports must be provided at least as often as they are for children in a regular program.
- State law and regulation require that your child's IEP be reviewed at least once a year. If needed, you, the school district's CPSE, or the preschool program provider may also ask for a meeting to discuss or review your child's program anytime during the school year.



*How will my child get to special education programs and services?*



## **Transportation**

- When the CPSE is planning programs and/or services for your child, they must also consider your child's

transportation needs, including the need for specialized transportation.

- If recommended by the CPSE, transportation will be provided by the county — once daily from the home or another child care location to the special service or program, and returning once daily from the special service or program to the home or other child care location — up to 50 miles from the child care location.
- Parents may be reimbursed for transporting their own child if the CPSE recommends transportation.
- Transportation will not be provided at public expense if the CPSE recommends special education itinerant teacher services or related services in the child's home or another child care setting which the parent has arranged.



Where do I get more information?

Ready... Set... Contact...

Your local school district:

- Principal
- CPSE Chairperson
- Director of Special Education

Your Municipality of Residence:

- Section 4410 Preschool Representative
- The Early Intervention Official (EIO)
- Your Early Intervention Service Coordinator

The Early Childhood Direction Center Program

SED Administrator

Albany, NY 12234

(518) 486-7462

SED/VESID - Preschool Unit:

Albany, NY 12234

(518) 473-6108

VESID Special Education

- Upstate Regional Office  
Albany, NY 12234  
(518) 473-1185
- New York City Regional Coordinator  
Brooklyn, NY 11217  
(718) 722-4544

Department of Health (DOH):  
Early Intervention Program  
Bureau of Child & Adolescent Health  
Albany, NY 12234  
(518) 473-7016  
<http://www.health.state.ny.us/>

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