

Preschool Special Education Program

The Preschool Special Education Program provides services to children who are 3 to 5 years old with developmental delays and/or educational needs. Eligibility is based on the results of a multi-disciplinary evaluation that is at no direct cost to the family. The local school district's Committee on Preschool Special Education (CPSE) determines eligibility, recommends appropriate special education and/or related services and creates an Individualized Education Program (IEP) for each eligible child.

The New York State Education Department (NYSED) administers, through local school districts, the Preschool Special Education Programs for preschool students with disabilities, 3 to 5 years of age. The Nassau County Department of Health contracts with providers and pays for these services along with NYSED.

THE REFERRAL

If a child receives early intervention services as an infant or toddler up to age three and continues to need services, the ongoing service coordinator can assist with transition planning and making a referral to your school district's Committee on Preschool Special Education (CPSE). More information can be found at the NYS Health Department website on transition from EI to Preschool Special Education here:https://www.health.ny.gov/community/infants_children/early_intervention/transition/

If a preschool-age child (3–5 years) did not receive early intervention services and there are concerns regarding possible educational delays, the parent or professionals who know the child may make a referral to the chairperson of the school district's CPSE. The Chair will assist the parent in completing the referral process. Each school district CPSE is made up of the parent, teachers, school district representatives, teachers, a representative from the County Health Department, parent member, etc.

Anyone with concerns for a preschooler can contact the local school district and make a referral to the CPSE. While typically the parents refer their child to the CPSE, a doctor, designated person in a public agency, someone from an Early Childhood Direction Center, an approved preschool program or the Early Intervention Program (EIP) can make a referral. In order to make a referral, you will first need to register your child at his/her elementary school of attendance. Once you have registered, you will receive a referral packet in the mail.

You can contact the Pupil Personnel Services Office at (516) 203-3600 ext. 3236.

EVALUATION PROCESS

When a child is referred to the CPSE, the parent is given a list of NYSED approved evaluators that provide multi-disciplinary education evaluations. After an approved evaluator is selected by the parent and the parent signs a consent form, the child will be evaluated at no cost to the family. A copy of the evaluation report, including a summary of the evaluation, will be provided to the parent and to other CPSE members.

CPSE MEETING

A meeting will be scheduled with your school district CPSE to discuss the evaluation results and determine if your child is eligible for the program.

- If your child is found not eligible for special education programs and/or services, the reasons will be provided in writing.

- If your child is found to be eligible for the Preschool Special Education Program, the CPSE will create individual goals and recommend programs or services to meet the child's needs in order to develop an Individualized Education Program (IEP).

The Preschool Special Education Program is mandated by New York State Education Law and the Federal Individuals with Disabilities Act. Funding for these special education programs and services is provided by New York State and the Nassau County Department of Health.