

Finding THE School

We have been honored to work with you and share the joy of your child's development over the years. However, as in all things, it is time for them to move on. We want you to know that we are here to assist you throughout this process. With the appropriate placement of your child as our mutual goal, here are a few guidelines and timelines that we hope will simplify the process for you as we move forward throughout the year: **Please Note: Reece School's middle school program is now following DOE guidelines with regards to a student's birthday cutoff date in order to determine a student's current grade. A student would be moving on from Reece School at the end of 8th grade.**

1. Right Now:

- Educate yourself about the process. We are here to help and will continue to assist you until you find an appropriate school for your children to continue their education.

September-October: Request in writing (by certified receipt), requested evaluations from the CSE.

- Letters to the CSE should include your child's name, NYC ID# (which can be found on the 1st page of your child's IEP) and date of birth. The letter should indicate that your child will be moving on from Reece School at the end of the 2020-2021 school year and that you are requesting updated testing (i.e. a reevaluation) to determine current functioning to assist with educational planning.

For those families that are considering moving their children on prior to the completion of 8th grade, letters can also be written to the CSE to request updated testing (i.e. a reevaluation) to assist with educational planning as well.

- If you are not satisfied with these evaluations, you have the right to request another public evaluation or an independent evaluation at the CSE's expense. (Please note that this request does not guarantee that the CSE will move forward with a second evaluation. However, it is important throughout this process that you make your desires and requests known to the CSE.)

2. October - November:

Confer with the Reece School team about your child's:

- Current level of functioning.
- Current needs.
- Possible school options

Your child's counselor is available to assist in discussing possible school options with you.

3. November – March:

- Research schools that may meet your child's needs; including ones that may not have been discussed as a possible option; however, you may have been interested in finding out more about.
- Contact the schools as they are identified.
- Set up an appointment to tour a school or sign up to attend school open houses.
- Evaluate the school's ability to meet your child's needs.
- Find out about the admissions procedure.
- Complete and submit applications to appropriate schools.
- Discuss progress with your child's Counselor as you research and visit the schools.

4. December:

- Follow up with the CSE regarding the completion of evaluations. (CSE evaluations may include an updated social history, psychological evaluation and written updates on all related services provided either here at the school and/or by an independent provider.)
- Compile copies of midyear reports from the Reece School as well as evaluations from the CSE or private contractors. These reports will not only be necessary for admissions to schools, but will also be used during your child's IEP meeting.

5. March: Continue to confer with the Reece School team about your child's progress and status of search for schools in preparation for graduation.

***Please keep counselors, apprised of your progress or concerns throughout your search so that we can continue to assist you.**

If you requested a CSE evaluation, request *IN WRITING* (by certified receipt) all reports and evaluations from the CSE.

- Review all the evaluations to insure they are *complete* and accurate.
- Please send copies of the reports to the Reece School.
- If you disagree with the CSE evaluations, consider obtaining an outside evaluation.

Between May-June: The committee on Special Education should have conducted a review to discuss your child's current level of functioning & current needs and the Committee's recommendation for placement. If placement in a New York Public School is recommended and you disagree, always remember that you maintain your rights to due process to challenge the decision of the CSE, including the request for mediation and/or an impartial hearing to seek an amendment to the decision and placement in a school you feel is more appropriate.

Below is the contact information for the CSE-9 District Representative who will be conducting our students Re-Evaluations for the 2021-2020 school year.

Ezra Zelkin, M.S.
School Psychologist, CSE 9
NYC Department of Education
333 7th Avenue, 4th Floor
New York, N.Y. 10001
Phone: 917-339-1593
EZelkin@schools.nyc.gov

Contact Information for the CSE 9 Chairperson

Esther Morell
333 Seventh Avenue, 4th floor,
New York, NY 10001
Phone: 917-339-1600
Fax: 917-339-1450

Parents that are interested in exercising their due process rights based on the outcome of an IEP meeting, can request a mediation and/or impartial hearing through the office below.

Impartial Hearing Office
131 Livingston Street - Room 201
Brooklyn, NY 11201
Phone: (718) 935-3280
EFax: (718) 391-6181

Advocate Agencies

Resources for Children with Special Needs
200 Park Ave. South, Suite 816
New York, NY 10003
212-677-4650

Advocates for Children
151 West 30th Street (between 6th & 7th)
New York, NY 10001
212-947-9779

Community Advocates for Educational Excellence, Inc.
1375 Broadway, 11th Floor
New York, NY 10018
(646) 278-9978

Partnership for Children's Rights
271 Madison Avenue, 17th Floor
Phone: 212-683-7999

Becoming Your Child's Best Advocate

1. Believe in your child.
2. Follow your intuition.
3. Remember that information is power.
4. Go after what you want.

Basic Advocacy Tips

1. Keep a notebook.
Always write down facts, including names and titles of people with whom you talk to, their phone numbers and dates when you spoke to them. **(This is especially important as there have been so many changes at the Department of Education)**
2. Keep a folder for paperwork you receive.
Don't be afraid to ask for answers in writing. If requesting anything in writing keep copies of all written requests to the DOE and received from the DOE.
3. Record phone conversations in the notebook.
Include the date and time of the call, along with the name, title, and telephone number of the person you spoke with.
Before placing the call, write down the questions that you will ask and leave space for the answers.
4. Write letters.
After a phone call, write a short letter summarizing the conversation to the person you talked to. Please keep all written summaries of phone calls in a folder for easy accessibility.

5. Attend all meetings to which you are invited.
If a meeting is scheduled at a time you cannot make, ask for it to be rescheduled. Propose an alternative time that is good for you. If you know that you are going to be late, call to let them know.
6. Be prepared for all meetings.
Make sure you know the purpose of the meeting. Focus on what your child needs.
7. Take notes during the meeting. Write down the names and titles of everyone attending the meeting whether in person or by teleconference.
8. If you do not understand something that is happening in a meeting, ask questions!
9. Take a friend with you to the meeting and to see schools.

Schools Contact List

<u>School Name</u>	<u>Address</u>	<u>Telephone</u>	<u>Website</u>	<u>Funded (yes/no)</u>
Aaron School	New York	212- 867-5443	www.aaronschool.org	No
Andrus School	Yonkers, NY	914-965-3700 ext. 1363	www.andruschildren.org	Yes
AHRC Middle/High School	Brooklyn	718-259-4389	www.ahrc.org	Yes
Birch School	Flushing, NY	718-591-8100	www.hgbirch.org	Yes
Child School	Roosevelt Island, NY	212-223-5055	www.thechildschool.org	Yes
Churchill School	New York	212-722-0610	www.churchillschool.com	No
Community School, Inc.	Teaneck, NJ	201-837-8070	www.communityschool.k12.nj.us	Yes
Cooke Academy	New York	212-995-1987	www.cookeschool.org	No
Gersh Academy	Huntington, NY	631-385-3342	www.gershacademy.org	No
Hallen School	New Rochelle, NY	914-636-6600	www.thehallenschool.net	Yes
The IDEAL School & Academy	New York	212-769-1699	www.theidealschool.org	No
League School	Brooklyn, NY	718- 498-2500	www.leagueschool.org	Yes

School Name	Address	Telephone	Website	Funded (yes/no)
Lifeline Center for Child Development	Queens Village, NY	718-740-4300 ext. 224	www.lifelinecenter.org	No
Lowell School	Bayside, NY	718- 352-3525	www.thelowellschool.com	Yes
Lowell High School	Flushing, NY	718-445-4222	www.thelowellschool.com	Yes
Mary McDowell Friends School	Brooklyn, NY (Middle School)	718-858-1707	www.marymcdowell.org	No
Mary McDowell Friends School	Brooklyn, NY (Elementary School)	718-625-3939	www.marymcdowell.org	No
Tiegerman School	Glen Cove, NY (grades 6-9)	516-609-2000 ext. 323	www.tiegerman.org	Yes
	Glen Cove, NY ((Elementary)	516-609-2000 ext.323	www.tiegerman.org	Yes
Tiegerman School at Woodside	Queens, NY (Pre-K-12)	516-609-2000 ext. 323	www.tiegerman.org	Yes
Tiegerman High School	Queens, NY (10-12 th grade)	516-609-2000 ext. 323	www.tiegermam.org	Yes
Summit School (Upper School)	Jamaica Estates, NY	718-264-2931 ext.206	www.summitschoolqueens.com	Yes
Westchester School for Special Children	Yonkers, NY	914-376-4300	www.westchesterschool.org	Yes
Windward School	White Plains, NY	914-949-6968 ext. 2225	www.windwardny.org	No
Winston Prep	New York	646-638-2750 ext. 619	www.winstonprep.edu	No
Woodward Children's Center	Freeport LI	516-379-0900	www.woodwardchildren.org	Yes

***The NYS Education Department provides a more extensive listing of NYS approved special education programs, which can be found at this**

link: [linkhttp://www.p12.nysed.gov/specialed/privateschools/853-statewide.htm](http://www.p12.nysed.gov/specialed/privateschools/853-statewide.htm)

Visiting the Schools

Plan to visit the school during the school day in order to observe the academic program. Above all, make sure that the classes will be in session when the visit is scheduled and that students are not in the gym, on a field trip, or taking tests.

Keep in mind that during the first few days of school any class may be disorganized. If you visit in September, therefore, you may not see how the class routinely functions. However, by meeting the teacher and the students, you can get some idea of what the class routines will be later on. If the teacher suggests that you will get a more accurate impression of how the classes will function at a later time, be sure to schedule another visit.

It is a VERY good idea to bring someone with you when visiting the school. If possible, talk to other parents whose children attend or have attended the school. Ask them about the program, teachers, and the school in general.

Questions When Visiting a Recommended Placement

Below is a list of questions that you should think about when visiting schools:

- What is the size of the classroom?
- Where is it located?
- How many students are in the class?
- What is the ratio of boys to girls?
- What materials are available?
- Is students' work displayed?
- How many professionals are in the classroom?
- Are the students involved in their social work?
- Is the atmosphere relaxed but well controlled?

When meeting with the teacher, here are some questions you may ask:

- Request to see a daily or weekly schedule.
- How many academic periods are there each day?

Questions When Visiting a Recommended Placement (Cont'd)

- How long is the instructional day (State law requires five hours a day, excluding lunch for elementary school students and five and one-half hours a day, excluding lunch for secondary school students, including those students enrolled in junior high school).
- How often are science and social studies offered?
- Are art, music, gym, shop, library and, social skills programming, athletics and other programs/activities, available?
- What is the curriculum? Is it similar or parallel to that used in general education classes?
- How do teachers individualize instruction?
- Does the class provide for the learning of daily living skills (hygiene, feeding, dressing, etc.) if the child needs this?
- Are there opportunities for vocational education (especially on a high school level)?
- In general, how do the students function in the class?
- If it is a high school program, how many students each year receive diplomas? IEP certificates? How many students dropped out?
- What approach is used to maintain discipline in the class? How are disruptive students handled?
- What teaching background do the classroom teachers have?
- What related services are offered in the school? How often are they available?
- How will all the related services specified in your child's IEP be provided?
- How is transportation to and from school arranged?
- If your child will travel by school bus, how long is the ride? What times will your child board the bus in the morning and return home?
- If your child travels by public transportation, what is the best route to and from school? How are the appropriate transportation passes arranged? Is the public transportation too complicated or too long for your child?
- How does the school develop intellectual, emotional, social, physical and vocational competence? How do they develop critical and creative thinking?

Questions When Visiting a Recommended Placement (Cont'd)

- Do they have enough materials? Do the teachers have access to new technologies?
- Is the building safe, efficient, well maintained? Would it be a pleasant place to work and learn?
- What processes are set up for communication between staff and parents?
- Who are the key personnel who will be working with your child? How will they monitor your child's progress? What information will they provide you on a regular basis and how will this information be conveyed? How will they coordinate their programs?