



A Guide for Parents as They Consider Special Education Placement

Parents are an important part of the IEP team and are entitled to visit proposed placements. This guide is designed to help you assess and compare placements so that you can make informed decisions about the appropriateness of a program for your son or daughter with disabilities.

ASAH
Lexington Square, 2125 Route 33
Hamilton Square, NJ 08690
1-877-287-ASA (2724)
www.asah.org



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Partnerships for Promising Futures

**Related Services
On-site or Consultative?**

Individual

Group

Notes:

| | | |
|--------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|
| Speech/Language Services | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Occupational Therapy | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Physical Therapy | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Audiology | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Social Work | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Counseling | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Psychological | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Positioning & Mobility | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| School Health Services | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Personal Care | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Behavior Specialist | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Assistive Technology | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Nursing Services | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Transition | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Psychiatric Services | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Other | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |

Nursing Services

For some students, access to nursing and health services is vital. Is there a school nurse? Can he/she administer medication? Does he/she have nursing experience that matches the needs of your child? How are other health issues (seizures, insulin injections, etc.) managed? Ask about the specific health services your child needs.

BEHAVIOR MANAGEMENT

For many students with disabilities, special education services are needed to reduce challenging behaviors and replace them with more appropriate behaviors.

How does the program plan for and manage challenging behavior? Is the behavior system utilized on a school-wide basis, or is it limited to particular students and/or classrooms? Does the school use a system of rewards and privileges for appropriate behavior? How is data collected and used to make decisions? Are staff credentialed (BCBA, social worker, school psychologist)? Are the behavioral teaching strategies grounded in research? Do they reflect best practices?

Does the school use specific procedures to reduce inappropriate behavior? Does the school use restraint procedures or time-out procedures? How is the use of these procedures monitored and reported to parents? How are staff trained and supervised? Are certifications maintained? How are parents involved in the decision-making about behavior management? What is the program's policy for suspension and expulsion?

ROLE OF PARENTS

Parent participation can be an important part of a special education program.

Formal Role for Parents: Is there a PTO or PTA? What is its role?

Parent Involvement: What supports are available to parents? Are parent volunteers welcome at school? In the classroom? What is the school's policy on parental visits and observations?

Home-School Communication: How is home-school communication handled?

Parent Support/Parent Education: Is there a support group for parents? Is parent training or parent education part of the program? Is there in-home support, if needed? Are parents encouraged to network with one another? Are there parent references you can call?

STAFF & ADMINISTRATION

All staff should be appropriately credentialed for the positions they hold, and should be certified and experienced.

What is the rate of staff turnover? What is the mix of new staff and experienced staff? Are program supervisors and clinical staff on-site and available to answer questions? Are consultants used to oversee the program? If so, how often are they on-site?

STUDENTS

What is the age range of students accepted at the program? At what age do students "age out?" Where do most students go when they leave? Are the students' disabilities similar to your child's? How far do most students travel to come to school? How long do most students remain at the program?

LICENSURE & ACCREDITATION

Is the school affiliated with, approved, or accredited by an independent source?

Approval

- New Jersey Department of Education Other State department

Affiliations/Accreditations

- ASAH membership Nat. Assoc. of Private Special Education Centers (NAPSEC)
 Middle States Association Teaching Family Assoc. (TFA)
 COA Comm. of Accreditation of Rehabilitation Facilities (CARF)
 Council for Exceptional Children Nat. Comm. for the Accred. of Spec. Ed. Servs. (NCASES)
 Other_____

After your visit

What was your general feeling about the program and the people you met?

Did you feel welcomed and were your questions answered?

Are the people you met knowledgeable about your child's disability?

This guide was produced by ASAH to help parents as they make decisions about their child's special education program. It is available online in both English and Spanish at <http://www.asah.org/>, 2nd reprint with revisions, ©2013 ASAH.