



# The Private School Option *for Students with Disabilities*

WHAT PARENTS **NEED**  
**TO KNOW!**

-serving the private  
special education community  
since 1974

# ASAH

# Letter from the **EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR**

Here at ASAH, we hear from parents like you every day. They tell us that finding the right school program for their child with disabilities is one of the hardest things they have ever done. They need information. They need guidance. They need support.

We hope to make that decision—and the advocacy work around it—a little easier.

This booklet is designed to help you understand your child's right to special education in a state-approved private special education school. Many parents are surprised to learn that all tuition costs, along with door-to-door transportation, are provided to students by the district, at no cost to parents.

Most of the time, students with disabilities can learn successfully in a general education classroom, right alongside typical peers in the local public school. But for some students, the public school is not able to deliver the services, supports, and accommodations the student needs.

That is where ASAH can help.

Here in New Jersey, there is a long and rich history of private special education. Our schools have positive, collaborative working relationships with local districts. In fact, more often than not, local school districts and parents agree when an out-of-district placement is needed. And more often than not, there is not an advocacy challenge.

If the local public program is not appropriate for your child, and you want to explore the option of a private special education program, call your school district. Then, call us.

ASAH is a resource that can help you and your Child Study Team find the right program for your child!

John J. Mulholland, Jr., Esq.  
Executive Director, ASAH

# A History of **SUCCESS**

SINCE 1895, PRIVATE SPECIAL education schools have been providing high quality special education to students with complex disabilities in New Jersey. Many private schools were started by parents just like you who were frustrated by a lack of appropriate, effective public school options. They wanted a compassionate environment for their child that offers specialized instruction and services.



In New Jersey, there are 130 ASAH member schools serving more than 10,000 students. Each school is unique. Our schools serve students with a wide range of challenges, including learning disabilities, autism spectrum disorders, cerebral palsy, mental health and behavioral disabilities, and intellectual disabilities, such as Down syndrome.

“I had a **dream** for my son, and I wanted him to go to a **school with others** who could believe in him!”



## One of your **OPTIONS**

YOUR LOCAL SCHOOL DISTRICT is required by law to offer all students with disabilities a full continuum of options, including placement in a private school. If you and your school district determine that a private school is the appropriate setting for your child, your local school district pays the tuition and provides transportation. There is never a cost to parents.

“My Child Study Team and I looked at a number of **options**, both public and private for my daughter. It was **clear** that the **only** place that could meet her needs was **a private school.**”

# Exceeding Parents' **EXPECTATIONS**

IF YOU ARE LIKE MOST PARENTS, YOU ARE LOOKING FOR:

- A school with a history of success.
- A school that sees your child for who they are and truly values them.
- A school that can meet your child's educational needs.
- Staff who are dedicated, well-trained, well-supervised, and accountable for your child's progress.
- A school in which your child is safe, and celebrated.
- A school that uses research-based teaching strategies.
- A school with a network of community referrals to support your family and your child beyond the school day, and after graduation.
- A school that values parent engagement and recognizes parents as essential to the success of a child.
- A school that provides a challenging curriculum.
- A school in which your child can be part of all aspects of school life, from assemblies and field trips to school teams, clubs, proms, student government, and the school play.
- A school that can prepare your child for independence and adult life.



“Here, **my input** is sought out and **valued**. I am part of a team! The teachers, the therapists, the director—they actually **WANT parents** to come to the school, observe and get **involved**.”

# Meeting Students' **NEEDS**

PRIVATE SCHOOLS FOR STUDENTS WITH DISABILITIES EXIST FOR one reason – to serve children with disabilities. They are creative and flexible so they can individualize their educational program to meet the unique needs of each child. Many schools offer related services, including speech, physical and occupational therapy, and assistive technology. They serve children who have not succeeded in other settings, and who may have a history of challenging behavior. And because they are small, the entire staff at a private school can really get to know your child.



“Here, everyone knows **my son.**

He does not **stand out** because  
of his disabilities. He stands out  
**because of who he is!”**

# The Teachers Make the **DIFFERENCE**

Teachers at ASAH Schools meet the same rigorous certification and credentialing standards as their public school colleagues.

They are uniquely qualified, energetic and motivated. They became teachers because they love children—they remain teachers because working at a private school allows them to make a difference in the life of a child. At a private school, they teach small classes with students they know personally. They are encouraged by other teachers and administrators who value their commitment, skill, and talent. The internal network of support at a private school, and the high morale it generates, helps to create an environment of success for all.



“Since my daughter has been attending a **private school**, the most amazingly **gifted** and dedicated **teachers** have been part of her life.”



# Offering Specialized **SERVICES**

Private schools can provide a full range of specialized supports and services to prepare students with disabilities to be fully participating members of their families and communities.

- Community integration and community-based instruction
- Therapies and related services
- School-wide and individualized positive behavioral support
- Parent education programs and support groups
- Extended school year instruction (ESY)
- Very small classes with individualized instruction
- Transition services that guide a student from school to adult life
- College preparation for students who will pursue post-secondary education
- Community-based work experiences
- Formal and informal “linkages” to adult service providers for students who will need on-going support and services as adults
- Mobility training



“I don’t know what I would do without the **support** I get from my **daughter’s school.**”

# Supporting Students' **TRANSITIONS**

PRIVATE SPECIAL EDUCATION SCHOOLS STRIVE TO MAXIMIZE EACH STUDENT'S POTENTIAL, opening doors for options and opportunities for life after high school. Beginning at age 14, and even younger in some cases, students are prepared for post-secondary life. Counselors and teachers teach practical life skills, self-advocacy skills, and self-care skills so young adults are ready to take care of themselves. Through community-based learning, job sampling, and career awareness, students learn about a wide range of work options and get hands-on job experience.

For students who want to go on to college, trade school, or the military, challenging course work and community connections get them ready for success.





“When we agreed that my **son** was **ready** to come back to our local school, the staff at the **private school** worked in close consultation with his **new teachers** and staff to provide training and **support.**”

# Measuring **SUCCESS**

PRIVATE SCHOOLS MEASURE THEIR SUCCESS NOT JUST BY THE NUMBER OF GRADUATES, but also by what those graduates can do with their lives. For some students, that may mean going to college or technical training. For others it means getting a job, a community volunteer experience, or adult day services and supports. Whatever the desired outcome, private schools are setting the pace. A recent outcomes study found that nearly all students graduating from private schools have plans and connections for further education, training employment, or community programs when they graduate.





## Making the **DECISION**

IF YOU BELIEVE A PRIVATE SCHOOL is the right choice for your child, call ASAH to help. Our trained advocates can help you understand your rights and your child's rights, and can provide information you need.



## **ADVOCACY HELP** Is Available

Our online private school placement tool box has resources and information to help you get started, including a check list to help you determine whether a program is a good fit for your child.

Visit **ASAH.org**

Call **(877) 287-ASAH**

# ASAH Member Schools

## by County

### ATLANTIC COUNTY

Y.A.L.E. School Northfield

### BERGEN COUNTY

Alpine Learning Group, Inc.  
Bergen Center for Child Development, Inc.  
CTC Academy, Inc. – Fair Lawn Campus  
CTC Academy, Inc. – Oakland Campus  
Community High School  
Community School Inc.  
David Gregory School  
ECLC of New Jersey (Ho-Ho-Kus Campus)  
Educational Partnership for Instructing Children (EPIC)  
Felician School for Exceptional Children, Inc.  
The Forum School  
The High Point School of Bergen County  
Holmstead School  
Institute for Educational Achievement  
REED Academy  
Windsor Bergen Academy  
Windsor Preparatory High School  
YCS - George Washington School

### BURLINGTON COUNTY

Bancroft School  
Bancroft Preschool & Early Education Program  
Durand Academy and Community Services  
Garfield Park Academy  
Hampton Academy  
Legacy Treatment Services – Mary A. Dobbins School  
Y.A.L.E. School Medford  
Y.A.L.E. School Voorhees

### CAMDEN COUNTY

Archway Programs  
Bancroft School at Voorhees Pediatric Facility  
Brookfield Schools  
Kingsway Learning Center & Services  
Larc School  
Y.A.L.E. School Cherry Hill  
Y.A.L.E. School Ellisburg

### CUMBERLAND COUNTY

Pineland Learning Center, Inc.

### ESSEX COUNTY

1st Cerebral Palsy of New Jersey  
ARC of Essex - Stepping Stones School  
Banyan School  
Deron School of New Jersey, Inc. (II)  
Essex Valley School  
Fedcap School  
Gramon Family of Schools (Glenview Academy, Gramon School, New Beginnings)  
Mt. Carmel Guild Academy  
Northwest Essex Community Healthcare Network - Therapeutic School & Preschool  
Phoenix Center, Inc.  
Pillar High School – Pillar Care Continuum  
Pillar School – Pillar Care Continuum  
Spectrum360 – Academy360 Lower School  
Spectrum360 – Academy360 Upper School  
Westbridge Academy  
YCS - Sawtelle Learning Center North

### GLOUCESTER COUNTY

Archbishop Damiano School  
HollyDELL School

### HUDSON COUNTY

North Hudson Academy  
St. Joseph's School for the Blind

### HUNTERDON COUNTY

The CEA School  
Hunterdon Preparatory School

### MERCER COUNTY

Bridge Academy  
Eden School and Adult Services  
Laurel School of Princeton  
Newgrange School



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Princeton Child Development Institute  
The Titusville Academy

## **MIDDLESEX COUNTY**

Gateway School  
Lakeview School – New Jersey Institute for  
Disabilities  
New Road School of Parlin

## **MONMOUTH COUNTY**

Children’s Center of Monmouth County  
Coastal Learning Center - Monmouth  
Collier Middle School and High School  
CPC Behavioral Healthcare - High Point  
Schools  
Harbor School  
LADACIN Network – Schroth School  
Oakwood School  
The Rugby School at Woodfield  
SEARCH Day Program, Inc.

## **MORRIS COUNTY**

Allegro School, Inc.  
The Calais School  
Celebrate the Children  
Chancellor Academy  
Chapel Hill Academy  
ECLC of New Jersey (Chatham Campus)  
P.G. Chambers School  
Shepard School  
Shepard Preparatory High School

## **OCEAN COUNTY**

Alpha School  
Education Academy  
LADACIN Network – Lehmann School  
New Road School of Ocean County

## **PASSAIC COUNTY**

Banyan Upper School  
Benway School  
Lakeview Learning Center  
North Jersey Elks Developmental Disabilities  
Agency (NJEDDA) Elementary School  
North Jersey Elks Developmental Disabilities  
Agency (NJEDDA) High School  
Windsor Learning Center  
Windsor School

## **SOMERSET COUNTY**

Bonnie Brae School  
The Center School  
East Mountain School (Hackensack Meridian  
Health, Carrier Clinic)  
Green Brook Academy  
The Matheny School at the Matheny Medical  
and Educational Center  
The Midland School  
Montgomery Academy  
New Road School of Somerset  
Rock Brook School

## **SUSSEX COUNTY**

Broadstep Academy, Inc. – In Honor of Jean  
M. Manfra

## **UNION COUNTY**

Cerebral Palsy League – Come Play and  
Learn Early Childhood Ctr.  
Cerebral Palsy League – CPL Adult Services  
Cerebral Palsy League – Jardine Academy –  
Cranford Campus  
Cerebral Palsy League – Kaleidoscope Early  
Intervention Program  
Deron School of New Jersey, Inc. (I)  
First Children  
Honor Ridge Academy  
Kohler Academy - A Bancroft School  
The Newmark School & High School  
Summit Speech School

## **WARREN COUNTY**

Warren Glen Academy



# ABOUT **ASAH**

ASAH is a non-profit organization of 130 state-approved private special education schools serving over 10,000 infants, children and young adults with disabilities. ASAH provides resources and referral, parent and student advocacy, legislative initiatives, and technical assistance.

For more information or assistance, please contact us:



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