



Mandy Vadnai | NYC Education Advising
Special Education School + Program Advisor
<https://www.nyceducationadvising.com>
917.576.8751

Special Education Terminology

6:1:1 - This refers to a self contained special education class with six children, one special education teacher and one paraprofessional. The 6:1:1 classes are for autistic school age children, and fall under the supervision of "District 75".

12 Month School Year - The public school year usually runs for ten months (September through June). However, there are children who because of their special education needs schooling or related services to continue during the summer months (July and August). These children are referred to as having a 12 month school year. The standard used in determining if a child needs a 12 month school year is if the child will have a substantial regression absent being in a 12 month program. The designation of a 12 month school year appears on the first page of a child's IEP. The majority of pre-schoolers receive 12 month IEPs, but this is increasingly difficult to obtain once a child reaches school age.

Annual Review: The annual meeting with your child's IEP team to review your child's progress.

Assistive Technology - Assistive Technology refers to equipment, products and services to improve, maintain or increase the functional capabilities of a student with a disability. For non-verbal children this can mean devices that help them communicate. For children with problems with written expressions it can mean a laptop. Before a CSE recommends assistive technology there must be an assistive technology evaluation.

Behavior Intervention Plan (BIP) - A Behavior Intervention Plan is a specific, well defined, written plan of action for managing a student's behavior. A BIP uses the observations made by a professional who conducts what is referred to as a Functional Behavior Assessment (FBA) of a child.

Carter - "Carter" refers to the 1993 U.S. Supreme Court decision, Florence County School District IV v. Shannon Carter, 510 U.S. 7 (1993), 114 S.Ct. 361. This decision expands the earlier 1985 U.S. Supreme Court decision known as "Burlington" and permits reimbursement to parents who place their child at an independent special education school as long if they satisfy what is known as the Burlington/Carter Three Prong test.



Mandy Vadnai | NYC Education Advising

Special Education School + Program Advisor

<https://www.nyceducationadvising.com>

917.576.8751

Central Based Support Team (CBST) - A Central Based Support Team is a centralized office for all NYC school districts which serves as the placement unit and funding arm when a CSE review team determines that a child needs a private school placement. CBST is charged with the responsibility of sending out packets of information to specific APPROVED private schools.

Center Based Program - A Center Based Program is also referred to as a therapeutic or special education preschool. The term is reserved solely for pre-school children . When a preschooler is determined to need special education and related services this option is often recommended. These schools usually provide a 25 hour per week program, offering not only special education but related services and round trip transportation. When the CPSE recommends this for a child it is completely funded by the DOE.

Classification - Classification is the first step in determining whether a child is eligible to receive special education services. For a preschool child there is only one classification: "Preschooler with a Disability." However, for a school age child there are 13 separate classifications recognized in New York State, these are:

1. **Autism**
2. **Deafness**
3. **Deaf-Blindness**
4. **Emotionally Disturbed (E.D.)**
5. **Hearing Impairment**
6. **Learning Disability (L.D.)**
7. **Mental Retardation (M.R.)**
8. **Multiple Disabilities**
9. **Other Health Impairment (O.H.I.)**
10. **Orthopedic Impairment**
11. **Speech or Language Impairment**



Mandy Vadnai | NYC Education Advising
Special Education School + Program Advisor
<https://www.nyceducationadvising.com>
917.576.8751

12. Traumatic Brain Injury (T.B.I.)

13. Visual Impairment

(Note: there is no separate classification for ADHD/ADD. If this is a child's sole diagnosis they can be classified either as: Emotional Disturbance; Learning Disabled or Other Health Impairment. Usually a district will choose Other Health Impairment.

Classified - The term "Classified" refers to any student who has met the criteria for classification and has an IEP. The question, "Is your child classified?" is answered in the affirmative your child has an IEP.

Council of Parents Attorneys and Advocates (COPAA) - This nationwide organization is a watchdog and lobbying group protecting the rights and interests of children with disabilities. www.copaa.org

Committee on Preschool Education (CPSE) - This division of the C.S.E. serves children from ages 3 to 5. In New York City pre-school services terminate in August of the calendar year that child actually turns five. This aging out requirement is different in outlying suburbs.

Committee on Special Education - Every school district has a CSE, whose function is to identify, evaluate, classify and create an IEP for children who are suspected of having an educational handicapping condition within their jurisdiction. Although NYC is technically only one school district because of the vast number of school age children living in the city, the D.O.E. has allocated a CSE for each of the geographic regions and districts. The CSE is actually composed of two branches – the CPSE (for pre-school children) and the CSE (for school age children).

Connors - The law allows families to have their tuition and/or services "directly funded" by the district, this payment can be deferred until later.

Collaborative Team Teaching (CTT) - This OLD TERM refers to an inclusion class where up to 40% of the class is composed of children who are classified and have an IEP. The remaining 60% of the students are general education students. In a CTT class which is always housed in a public school, there are two full time teachers in the classroom - a special education teacher and a general education teacher. In 2009 the term was replaced by Integrated Co-Teaching (ICT), but some districts still use the term CTT.



Mandy Vadnai | NYC Education Advising

Special Education School + Program Advisor

<https://www.nyceducationadvising.com>

917.576.8751

District - This refers to a school district. Officially NYC is one school district but because of the vast number of children the city has chosen to divide itself into 31 smaller geographic districts, which then compose 10 larger Regions. Each Region has its own C.S.E. and its own separate offices and staff.

District 75 - Unlike the other regions in NYC which are defined by geography, District 75 is a “service district.” It is a district created to provide educational programs and related services to the most severely disabled children in our city. These children are sometimes referred to as “low incidence of occurrence.” The self contained classes and programs for autistic children fall under this category as do most of the programs for physically disabled and medically fragile children.

Early Intervention (EI) - A Federal program available to children from birth to age three, who display a 25% delay in two or more areas of development. This program provides evaluations as well as a host of services, including: ABA, feeding therapy, occupational therapy, physical therapy, play therapy, speech therapy, special education and parent training. It is a free program and available to all children regardless of a parent's financial resources. The first step in accessing this program is generally through a child's pediatrician, however parents can self refer.

Educational Planning Conference (EPC) - This meeting is often used as a precursor to a CSE review, where the findings of testing and evaluations are reviewed with parents by the professionals who conducted them.

Education Records Bureau (ERB) - A private organization which is responsible for administering entrance exams required by most independent non special education private schools.

Extended School Year (ESY) - A provision for special education students to receive instruction during ordinary school “vacation” periods (most often used during the summer). In NYC it is also referred to as a 12 MSY.

Free Appropriate Public Education (FAPE) - Learn this critical term! FAPE is the cornerstone of all special education law. A FAPE is the fundamental right and entitlement of every child who has been identified as having an educational handicapping condition. This is a federal guarantee given to children and their parents by both the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 (Section 504) and the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA).

Functional Behavioral Assessment (FBA) - This is generally done by a licensed psychologist to assess a child whose behaviors interfere with classroom functioning.



Mandy Vadnai | NYC Education Advising

Special Education School + Program Advisor

<https://www.nyceducationadvising.com>

917.576.8751

There are clear regulations about how this should be done, and the fact that it must be done in order to create a B.I.P. (Behavior Intervention Plan)

Final Notice of Recommendation (FNR) - This one page document is sent to a parent after their child's CSE review meeting. This document will refer the child to a specific class/school.

Full Scale Intelligence Quotient (FSIQ) - This is the weighted average of sub-scores of an I.Q. or intelligence test.

Grade Equivalent (GE) - You will often see these numbers on an educational evaluation or on the I.E.P. It indicates what grade and the month a child is scoring in a specific area. For example a G.E. in calculation of 2.9 means that in the area of mathematical calculation the child is scoring in the 9th month of 2nd grade.

Hearing - When this term is used by a CSE or school district it generally means Impartial Hearing or Due Process Hearing. This is a legal proceeding occurring when parents disagree with the classification or program recommendation made by a CSE review team

Home Based Program - A special education program that occurs in a child's home or a therapist's office or sensory gym, as opposed to in a school or center based facility. Home based programs are generally used for preschoolers. A SEIT falls under this category. There are pre-schoolers who receive both center based programs and have a home based program as well. In some school districts, generally outside of NYC (in rare instances) a school age child can have both a school and home based program, but this is unusual and difficult to accomplish.

Inclusion - A popular philosophical position based upon the belief that we need to return to one educational system for all students and that every student is entitled to an instructional program which meets his or her individual needs and learning characteristics within a general education classroom environment.

Independent Evaluation - Testing done by someone who does not work for the school system.

Individual with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA) - This is the federal law (statute) governing special education throughout the USA. It is actually a funding statute which assures that children with educational handicaps receive special education and related services that are appropriate for them. It is the seminal law establishing



Mandy Vadnai | NYC Education Advising

Special Education School + Program Advisor

<https://www.nyceducationadvising.com>

917.576.8751

and protecting special education in our country. The official citation for this statute is 20 U.S.C. 1400-1415.

Individual Education Program (IEP) - This is the document created by the CSE indicating a child's classification, program recommendation, related services, goals and objectives. An IEP is a legal document that must be created by adhering to legal procedures.

Least Restrictive Environment (LRE) - Special education law requires that every classified student be educated in the least restrictive environment where they can have as much exposure as possible to typically developing peers. For example a CTT class is less restrictive than a self-contained 12:1 class, and a 12:1 class is less restrictive than a 6:1:1 class. A private special education school is considered one of the most restrictive placements because there is no opportunity for any interaction with typically developing peers, on the assumption that all children in that type of school have a handicapping condition.

Mainstreaming - A term used where a child with an IEP has an opportunity to be educated with or alongside typically developing non-special education students in a regular classroom, for a portion of each school day. It also refers for opportunities to participate with typical children for non-academic activities, such as lunch, art, music, assembly and trips.

Mandated Three-Year Reevaluation - A reevaluation must be completed once every three years, unless you and the DOE agree in writing that it is not necessary. Parent or school staff can also request a reevaluation, but it will not take place more than one time a year unless you and the DOE agree otherwise in writing.

NEST - A relatively new and highly coveted NYC public school inclusion program for children with high functioning Autism or Asperger Syndrome. The program begins in kindergarten which is the point of entry for most children. The NEST classes have 12 children, generally four to six of these children have an IEP with an autism classification and the rest of the students are non-handicapped. Two teachers instruct this class - one is a special education teacher with knowledge about autism and the other a general education teacher.

Nickerson Letter - The official term for this is a P-1 Letter and it is only valid for NYC special education students. A Nickerson Letter is a voucher-like mechanism which enables a child to be funded at an approved special education school when the district fails to adhere to a strict timeline of evaluation and placement. Some people simply refer to this as "A Nickerson."



Mandy Vadnai | NYC Education Advising

Special Education School + Program Advisor

<https://www.nyceducationadvising.com>

917.576.8751

Office of Pupil Transportation Services (OPTS) - As the name implies this is the central office for the entire NYC D.O.E. handling bussing and school transportation. Their website is: <http://schools.nyc.gov/Offices/Transportation> Their telephone number is 718-392-8855. When calling, always have your child's nine digit OSIS number available.

OSIS Number - Every student in the NYC school system has an OSIS number, which is also referred to as a NYC Student I.D. Number. It is a nine digit number, which appears on the first page of an I.E.P. It also appears on all official transcripts and documents concerning a child in the NYC school system.

Parentally Placed - A private school placement made by parents who are not seeking reimbursement. Generally this refers to private mainstream and religious school placements, it should not be confused with a unilateral placement.

P2 Letter - The form that approved private schools must complete when a child is granted a P-1 or Nickerson letter. Again this only pertains to NYC. Without returning this form a school does not get paid for a particular student.

P3 Letter - A voucher for a parent to secure private after school tutoring for their child, when the child has an IEP that recommends SETSS but either the public school that the child attends does not have the availability of this service, or is at a private mainstream school.

Preschool Pendency - When a parent(s) of a classified pre-school child disagree with the school age kindergarten placement being recommended for their child by the CSE Turning 5 committee, and the parents file for an impartial hearing, then during the pending hearing and any subsequent appeal the child can remain in his/her pre-school placement and the DOE is required to fund this placement during the hearing and appeal. This is a highly technical proceeding and is generally done by an attorney on behalf of the parent and child.

Related Services - The IDEA defines related services as: "transportation and such developmental, corrective, and other supportive services as are required to assist a child with a disability to benefit from special education.

Related Service Authorization (RSA) - This voucher device is unique to NYC and enables a child to receive private, after school related services through a list of approved providers. An RSA is issued by the school district when the public school cannot provide the service to the child in the public school that the child attends, or



Mandy Vadnai | NYC Education Advising

Special Education School + Program Advisor

<https://www.nyceducationadvising.com>

917.576.8751

when the parent parentally places the child in a private school and is not seeking reimbursement.

School Based Support Team (SBST) - A Subcommittee of the CSE found in every public school, whose functions replicate the CSE.

Special Education Itinerant Teacher (SEIT) - A licensed special education teacher who is assigned to a pre-school child as part of their home based program and provides one to one specialized instruction.

Special Education Teacher Support Services (SETSS) - One type of special education service, it used to be called resource room. Generally there is one special education teacher working with up to 8 classified children for anywhere from 3 to 5 periods per week.

Turning 5 - Families of children with disabilities entering kindergarten in September will take part in two processes. They are: the Turning 5 Process, which is how special education services and supports are determined for children entering kindergarten.

Unilateral Placement - A placement made by a parent without the recommendation, approval or consent of the C.S.E. or school district. This term is usually used when referring to placement in a private special education school, but can also be used for a private therapist or other services that a parent on his or her own initiates and funds.