

<P/G NAME>
PARENT / GUARDIAN OF <STUDENT NAME>
<STREET ADDRESS INCLUDING APT #>
<CITY, STATE ZIP>

February 2016

Dear Parent/Guardian,

Thank you for your recent application to kindergarten for your child. On the application, you indicated that your child has an accessibility need – that is, that your child has limited mobility and therefore may need a school with specific features that will allow him/her to access school. For example, a child may need a school with an elevator. Please see page 2 for more information on accessible schools.

In the coming weeks, we will send you an offer of admission to a school based on your kindergarten application. Please note that our initial admissions decision will **not** take accessibility need into account; therefore, your child may receive an offer to a school that is not accessible.

If you believe your child has limited mobility and requires an accessible site, then you should use one of the two processes below:

➤ Evaluation process for an Individualized Education Program (IEP)

If your child may need special education services in addition to an accessible site, then you should write a letter asking for a special education evaluation to the Committee on Special Education (CSE). More information about this process is on page 3.

➤ Evaluation process for a 504 Accommodations Plan

If you do not think your child needs special education services, and only needs an accessible site, then you should submit the Request for Accommodations packet to the school you are offered in March. More information about this process is on page 2.

If you would like more information or have any questions, please contact us:

Transition to Kindergarten process:

Turning5@schools.nyc.gov

718-935-2007

504 Accommodations process:

section504inquiries@schools.nyc.gov

718-391-8116

Kindergarten Admissions process:

SEEnrollment@schools.nyc.gov

718-935-2009

Sincerely,

New York City Department of Education
Special Education Office
Office of School Health
Office of Student Enrollment

Building Accessibility

What is a functionally accessible school?

A functionally accessible school is located in a partially or fully accessible building that has the features needed for an individual with mobility impairment to enter and access all relevant programs and services, including the science laboratory, library, cafeteria, and the gymnasium. At least one restroom is accessible.

Resources

More information about accessibility in NYCDOE public schools, including a list of functionally accessible schools by borough, is available on the DOE's website at <http://schools.nyc.gov/Offices/OSP/Accessibility>.

The Kindergarten Directory's school pages also state whether the school is accessible or not. Look for a picture of a wheelchair at the upper right hand corner. Find the Directories online at: www.nyc.gov/schools/kindergarten. You can also call or visit the school offered in March through the kindergarten admissions process to see if it can meet your child's needs for an accessible school.

The Section 504 Accommodation Plan Process

What is a 504 Accommodation Plan?

Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act (1973) protects students with disabilities by requiring public schools to provide eligible students reasonable and appropriate accommodations, so they may participate fully in schools. This plan outlines how the DOE will provide the accommodation(s), which may include offering a student an accessible school.

Who is eligible?

Students with physical and/or mental impairment(s) that limits one or more major life activities may qualify for a 504 Accommodation Plan, even if they are not eligible for special education services.

What is the process?

Complete the attached **Request for Accommodations under Section 504** form (with sections to be completed by you and by your child's physician) and/or the appropriate health/medical forms, as appropriate. Submit them to the school you are offered in March through the Kindergarten admissions process. If, after review, it is found that your child needs an accessible site, and the offered school does not meet your child's limited mobility needs, then a new placement will be assigned.

Resources

More information about 504 Accommodations is available in the **504 FAQ** on the DOE's website at <http://schools.nyc.gov/Offices/Health/SchoolHealthForms>. You can also contact us by calling 718-391-8116.

The Individualized Education Program (IEP) Process

An Individualized Education Program (IEP) documents a child's eligibility for special education services and the Department of Education's (DOE's) plan for providing the child with the services and supports he or she needs. Special education services are designed to support students in making educational progress; a child is eligible for special education services if he or she has an educational disability that significantly affects his or her ability to learn.

If you believe your child may have an educational disability and needs special education services in kindergarten, you can request a special education evaluation by writing a letter to the chairperson of the Committee on Special Education (CSE) for the district where you live. To find out which district you live in, search for your zoned school by entering your address at www.nyc.gov/schools/schoolsearch or call 311. Contact information for CSEs is available on our website at <http://schools.nyc.gov/Academics/SpecialEducation/ContactsResources/cse> or by calling 718-935-2007.

After your child's evaluation, you will be invited to participate at the IEP meeting as a member of your child's IEP team. At the meeting, the IEP team will determine whether your child is eligible for special education services in kindergarten and, if so, will then develop a school-age IEP. At the meeting, the IEP team will also determine whether your child needs an accessible school, and, if so, indicate the need in the IEP. Please work with your child's team to ensure as much information as possible about your child's mobility needs is written on the IEP. This will help us match your child to an appropriately accessible school, if needed.

To provide information about your child's need for an accessible school (and other needs related to a medical condition or orthopedic impairment), you should give these forms to the school psychologist assisting you with the IEP process before the IEP meeting:

- **Authorization for Release of Health Information Pursuant to HIPAA**, completed and signed by you, to allow the DOE to request medical information from health care providers
- **Request for Medical Accommodations to be Completed by Treating Physician**, completed and signed by your child's physician

Both forms, and additional information about the transition to kindergarten special education, are available on the DOE's website, at <http://schools.nyc.gov/KindergartenSpecialEducation>.