

<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 may need a school with specific building features that will allow him/her to access school. For example, a child may need a school with an elevator. Please see page 2 of this letter for more information on accessible schools.

According to our records, you are currently in the Transition to Kindergarten process, which determines your child's eligibility for school-age special education services (beginning in kindergarten). For more information on this process, please see page 3. You will be invited to an Individualized Education Program (IEP) meeting as a member of the IEP team to determine if your child is eligible to receive special education services in kindergarten and, if eligible, develop an IEP for September 2016. If the IEP team finds that your child needs an accessible school, the IEP will state that need. Please work with your child's IEP team to make sure 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.

In the coming weeks, we will send you an offer of admission to a school that is based on your kindergarten application. Please note that initial admissions decisions will **not** take accessibility need into account; therefore, your child may receive an offer to a school that is not accessible. If your child's school-age IEP states that your child needs an accessible school, and the school offered through the kindergarten admissions process does not meet your child's limited mobility needs, then you will receive an updated placement no later than June 15th (for children who are referred by March 1, 2016).

If the IEP team finds that your child is not eligible to receive special education services, but your child needs an accessible school, then you should submit the Section 504 Request for Accommodations packet to the school 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:	ESEnrollment@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 fully or partially accessible school 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 indicate 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 Accommodations 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 reevaluation, 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>.