



**Department of
Education**

**STUDENTS WITH DISABILITIES
ARTICULATING TO HIGH SCHOOL:
FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS
2008-09**

Introduction

The New York City Department of Education has recently improved the High School Admissions Process to better match students with programs of their choice. Students with disabilities participate in the High School Admissions Process in the same way as their non-disabled peers. This applies to all students with Individualized Education Programs (IEPs) that recommend they attend programs in a regular school setting. Students that are recommended to attend a high school in a specialized District 75 program or New York State Approved non-public school program that serves students with disabilities are placed in schools through a separate process.

There are several publications created by the Office of Student Enrollment that help families and students navigate the High School Admissions Process. These guides include timelines and information on different selection methods. Materials include:

- Directory of NYC Public High Schools: The Directory is published each June for distribution to 7th graders who will apply for admission to a New York City high school during their 8th grade year. This directory contains information about all of the schools and programs to which students may apply.
- Making Choices: This booklet is distributed along with the directory as a workbook guide to understanding the HS Directory.
- Choosing a High School: This guide is intended for middle school students and parents as an introduction to the high schools in the High School Admissions Process.

These publications are available on the DOE Web site at:

www.nyc.gov/schools/ChoicesEnrollment/High/Publications/default.htm

In addition, the Office of Student Enrollment conducts high school admission workshops for middle school families in both the spring and the fall. Please ask your child's guidance counselor for a workshop schedule.

Students with disabilities, subject to the same eligibility requirements as non-disabled students, may apply to all schools and/or programs listed in the Directory of New York City High Schools. Students with disabilities may take the Specialized High Schools Admissions Test and may apply for all audition programs, including Fiorello H. LaGuardia High School of Music & Art and Performing Arts, a specialized high school.

To assist parents of students with disabilities with the High School Admissions Process, we have compiled a list of frequently asked questions and answers. This document is intended to supplement the resources provided by the Office of Student Enrollment.

Q. As a parent, when should I start talking about high school at IEP meetings? What questions should I be asking?

- A. You and your child should start discussing goals for high school and the special education services your child requires during the annual reviews throughout middle school, beginning in the 6th grade. In addition, your child's 7th grade marks, test scores, and attendance record will appear on his/her application, so you and your child should keep this in mind from the start of the 7th grade year.

Beginning at age 15 or younger (if appropriate), your child's IEP must include appropriate post-secondary goals. At this time you must also consider and discuss with school personnel the type of diploma your child may be able to attain. The IEP requires that a diploma objective be specified on the transition page for all secondary level students. It is important to begin thinking about all of these factors throughout middle school.

Please keep in mind that students with disabilities must meet New York State established criteria for earning a diploma (please see the question about diploma requirements on Page 8).

Q. How are special education services different in high school than middle school?

- A. If your child receives instruction in a Collaborative Team Teaching (CTT) class or special class for one or more subject areas, the class may be comprised of different students in each subject area. All students receiving CTT or special classes do not necessarily attend class together each period of the day. In addition, special classes in high school typically have 15 students and 1 teacher (i.e. 15:1 staffing ratio).

Your child may also receive a combination of different service delivery models for different subject areas or your child may be mainstreamed, in different subject areas as appropriate. Any combination of the service delivery models may be appropriate in different subject areas. This information will be outlined in your child's IEP.

If your child receives Special Education Teacher Support Services (SETSS) in a separate location in high school, SETSS will be scheduled as an additional period on his/her program.

Q. How do I ensure that my child's IEP is up-to-date and appropriate for high school?

- A. At the IEP meeting that is held in 8th grade, the updated IEP should reflect the program that the student will receive in the high school. There should be a discussion regarding your child's diploma objective, disability related academic and social/emotional issues, and the special education services needed to support your child in a high school environment. Consider the amount of time your child will be spending in general education classes alongside his/her non-disabled peers.

Q. Does the Committee on Special Education (CSE) office play a role in the High School Admissions Process?

The CSE office does not play a role in the High School Admissions Process.

Q. What if my student attends a District 75 middle school program?

- A. The options for District 75 students are explained comprehensively starting on page 9.

Q. Where can I get a high school application?

- A. Eligible 8th grade students in New York City public schools receive applications from their guidance counselors. Ninth grade students must request an application from their guidance counselor.

Private and parochial school students who are residents of New York City will need to complete a different version of this application that is available at the student's private/parochial school. If the student's school does not have an application available, a school representative should call the Office of Student Enrollment at (212) 374-2363 to obtain the application.

Students currently attending a District 75 program or a State approved private school serving students with disabilities who may no longer require this level of support for high school may get a high school application from their current school. If the student's school does not have an application available, a school representative should call the Office of Student Enrollment at (212) 374-2363 to obtain the application.

Q. What factors should all students (disabled and non-disabled) consider when deciding what school choices to list on the high school application?

- "Eligibility" is the first thing to consider when deciding whether to list a school on the application. A student is eligible if he/she has met the school's requirements. The eligibility requirements for each school are listed in the Directory on the left side of the school profile. For example, a school might say that eligibility is open only to Brooklyn residents; so if the student lives in Queens he/she should not apply.
- Some school profiles will have information about "priority." Students are placed in groups based on meeting priority criteria. After students in the first priority group are matched, students in the second group will be offered matches, depending on space available. If a student likes and is eligible for a school program, but *doesn't have* priority, he/she should still include the school on the list.
- You and your child should understand the school's selection method. It is recommended to list programs with different selection methods.
- You should also consider the number of applicants compared to the number of seats. The Directory lists show the number of program seats available compared to the number of applicants from the previous year. Though this information does not specify the number of students with disabilities who applied, it does give an indication of the demand for the program and the percentage of applicants who apply and are matched to that program.
- Learn about the special education services currently available at the school. These can be found in the High School Directory. Keep in mind however, that schools develop new programs and services to meet the needs of their students each year.

Q. What other factors should be considered when making high school choices?

- A. We recommend that students also consider the following factors when making school choices:
- Where is the school located? How long will it take to travel from home? Is your child prepared to travel?
 - How many students attend the school? How many students with disabilities attend the school?

- What extra-curricular activities are offered, including clubs and sports?
- Does a student need to take a test or audition to gain admission?
- Do I want to attend a Career and Technical Education (CTE) school?
- What opportunities are there for parental involvement?
- What after-school academic supports are available to students?
- What types of services are available for English Language Learners?
- What service delivery models does the school use to support students with disabilities?
- What are the outcomes of students with disabilities? How many typically graduate with a Regents, Local, or IEP diploma?

To obtain detailed information about schools, you may review their annual school report at: www.nyc.gov/schools/daa/schoolreports. You may also want to review schools' Special Education Service Delivery Report available on the DOE Web site on each school's webpage under "Statistics."

Q. What are the different types of selection methods?

- A. The Directory of the New York City Public High Schools explains the different types of selection methods used to match students and programs. To select from among eligible students, programs use the selection methods outlined below. Students who receive special education services are matched in the same way as their general education peers.

Audition - The student must demonstrate his/her talent in a performing or visual art by auditioning. The audition requirements are listed with each school's profile. Students who audition are then ranked by the school. Only students who have been ranked by the school can be matched to this program.

Educational Option (Ed. Opt.) - Under this method, the school ranks half of the incoming students, while the other half is randomly matched by computer from the remainder of the applicant pool that meets the Eligibility Requirements. Both groups are chosen from within the following distribution of the student's standardized reading test scores from the previous year:

- 16% from the high reading range*
- 68% from the average reading range
- 16% from the low reading range

* If the student scored in the top 2% on the 7th grade reading test and listed an Ed. Opt. program as their first choice on his/her application, the student is guaranteed a match to that program.

Limited Unscreened - Priority is given to students who, with their parents, attend a school's information session, open houses, etc. It is necessary for the student to sign-in at these events.

Screened - Selection is based on academic record, standardized test scores and attendance. Each Screened Program lists its specific criteria in the High School Directory. Only students who are ranked by the school can be matched to screened programs. All students are held to the same screening criteria.

Test - Eight of the Specialized High Schools require the Specialized High Schools Admissions Test (SHSAT) for admission. Fiorello H. LaGuardia High school is also a Specialized High School and admission is based on the outcome of a competitive audition

and a review of the student's academic record. Applying to these schools involves getting an admission ticket for the test from the student's guidance counselor. Students interested in taking the test and/or auditioning should see their guidance counselor. The guidance counselor is required to submit any testing accommodations prior to the test.

Unscreened - Students are randomly selected for these programs. Because a student can't know his/her chances of being accepted (even if he/she meets all eligibility requirements), he/she should rank it on the application below programs the student likes more and above programs the student likes less.

Zoned Schools - Some areas of the City have schools intended to serve students living in the catchment area (known as the "zone"). Zoned schools have programs designated with a "Z".

If the student wishes to attend his/her zoned school, the student must include the school's zoned program as one of their choices. To find out if the student has a zoned school, ask the student's guidance counselor or look at the high school application.

Students do not have to apply to their zoned school. However, if a student does apply to his/her zoned school he/she is guaranteed admission unless he/she is matched to a program that is listed higher on his/her application.

Q. Can I apply to my zoned program?

- A. Yes. Anyone interested in attending his/her zoned program must include the zoned program code as a choice on his/her application.

Q. Am I assured of getting a seat at my zoned program?

- A. Any student who lives in the geographic area for a zoned program and includes the zoned school as one of the 12 choices on his/her application will automatically be matched to that program if they are not matched to a program listed higher on his/her application.

Q. Can I apply for a zoned program if I do not live in the zone area?

- A. Yes. We do reserve a limited number of seats for out-of-zone students in each zoned program.

Q. Must I make 12 choices?

- A. No. However, the more choices you make, the greater your chance of being matched to a program of your choice.

Q. Can I apply to a school more than once?

- A. No. However, a student may apply to more than one program in a school. It is not uncommon for a high school to have one or more separate programs contained within the school. For example, Murry Bergtraum High School offers eight different programs, including Accounting, Legal Studies, and Travel and Hospitality, which are all considered part of the high school itself.

Q. Does a school see how a students ranks it on his/her list?

- A. No. Schools only know that a student has listed the program on his/her application.

Q. What is the role of the guidance counselor in the High School Admissions Process?

- A. The guidance counselor is the family's best source for information and advice on the High

School Admissions Process. Parents should know the name and contact information for their student's guidance counselor.

Q. Is information about a student's disability available to the schools to which the student is applying?

- A. Yes. Principals have access to students' 7th grade attendance data, reading and math standardized test scores, and their subject grades. Principals can also see information about a student's special education program and the services recommended on the student's IEP.

Q. How do I find out which schools have the programs and services my child needs?

- A. This information can be obtained from your child's guidance counselor, in the High School Directory, and at high school fairs and parent workshops. Parent coordinators, principals, assistant principals, school open houses, and the DOE Web site can also provide helpful information.

Q. The Directory of New York City High Schools indicates that students with special needs may apply to any school. How do I know that the school that accepts my child will be able to provide the support he or she needs?

- A. Schools are expected to develop flexible special education supports for all students who are matched to their schools.

Q. What happens if the school that accepts my child does not have the type of class recommended on his or her IEP?

- A. If the type of service delivery model (i.e. special class, collaborative team teaching, etc) on your child's IEP is not available at the school, the IEP team, which includes the parent, will arrange a meeting within 30 days of the student's entry to the school to develop an IEP that will recommend a service delivery model to meet the special education needs of your child at that school.

Please note: While middle schools have historically used a special class service delivery model, this pattern of service delivery is changing. Many students are now moving to more inclusive service delivery models such as collaborative team teaching. If however, your child is recommended for a special class, and that is the only special education model that you want for your child, then you should apply only to schools that indicate in the Directory that they have special classes.

Q. What if my child gets to his or her new high school and finds that the school is unable to provide enough support? What should I do if this is the case?

- A. First, you should first speak directly with the school about appropriate services that will meet your child's needs.

Beginning high school is your child's first step in transitioning to an independent adult life. A Least Restrictive Environment (LRE) program, which is a program that offers opportunities for your child to receive his/her special education supports alongside his/her non-disabled peers, is an important step in advancing your child toward their future goals. You should work with the school in evaluating supports and options that will assist your child in achieving his/her goals in high school.

If, after speaking with school staff, you still have concerns about support for your child, you should contact the District Family Advocate. If the DFA cannot solve your problem, you should call 311 and ask to be transferred to the Special Education Call Center.

Q. My child's IEP currently requires Collaborative Team Teaching (CTT). If I think he/she no longer needs it, can he/she apply to a high school that does not have CTT, without a change to his IEP?

- A. Yes. Students who are recommended to receive Related Services Only or SETSS participate in the High School Admissions Process in the same manner as non-disabled students. Related Services and/or SETSS may be provided at all schools. If the type of service delivery model on your child's IEP is not available at the school, the IEP team, which includes the parent, will arrange a meeting within 30 days of the student's entry to the school to develop an IEP that will recommend a service delivery model to meet the special education needs of your child at that school.

Q. What are the different types of diplomas?

- A. Students with disabilities must be given the opportunity to earn a diploma. The types of diplomas and requirements are outlined below:

Diploma Type	Requirements	Post-Secondary Options
Advanced Regents	Attain a minimum of 44 high school credits; Pass 8 Regents Examinations with a 65% or better.	4-year college or university, competitive employment, military services
Regents	Attain a minimum of 44 high school credits; Pass 5 Regents Examinations with a 65% or better.	4-year college or university, competitive employment, military services
Local	Attain a minimum of 44 high school credits; Students with disabilities can get a local diploma by passing 5 Regents Examinations or the appropriate Regents Competency Tests. Students must have attempted a Regents Examination before or after taking a Regents Competency Test. This safety net is in effect for students entering high school through September 2009.	4-year college or university, competitive employment, military services
IEP	Achieve the educational goals specified on the IEP; These educational goals are set by the IEP team and must be linked to learning standards and appropriate performance indicators.	Supportive or competitive employment. An IEP diploma is not acceptable for certain types of employment, college, or military service.

The IEP developed must provide the special education supports and services your child needs to reach his/her diploma objective specified on the IEP.

It is also important to remember that your child's participation in the general education curriculum and participation in State testing influences your child's diploma objective. If your child is participating in alternate State assessments, he/she will not qualify for a Local or Regents diploma, but may receive an IEP diploma.

Q. My child is in a Collaborative Team Teaching (CTT) or special class program in a regular school and his/her IEP requires him/her to participate in alternate assessment. How can I find out which schools have CTT or special classes that are appropriate for students like my child?

- A. Prior to submitting your child's high school application, you should confer with your child's guidance counselor, who will provide this information and assist you in applying to appropriate schools.

Q. What is a Transition Plan?

- A. Transition services must appear in your child's IEP no later than the first IEP that is in effect on the child's 15th birthday (or earlier if determined by the IEP team). Transition services

promote movement from school to post-school activities, including post-secondary education, vocational training, integrated employment (including supported employment), continuing and adult education, adult services, independent living, or community participation. Transition services include instruction, related services, community experiences, the development of employment and other post-school adult living objectives, and when appropriate, acquisition of daily living skills.

Q. Where can high schools obtain support for students with disabilities?

- A. Each school has selected a school support organization that includes staff to assist schools in developing programs and providing instructional strategies for students with disabilities. In addition, the Integrated Service Centers and the central Office of Special Education Initiatives support schools on special education issues.

Q. What do I do if my child needs an accessible (barrier free) high school?

- A. An Accessible Site is a facility where architectural barriers do not exist or have been removed to allow students with limited mobility access to programs and activities. Both functionally and partially accessible sites exist. A list of accessible sites can be found on the DOE website at: <http://schools.nyc.gov/NR/rdonlyres/41ACD8D4-DDD2-4F1A-AEF0-AF3A9D132EBB/0/ListofAccessibleSchools2007.pdf>

If an otherwise qualified student with disabilities is matched to a program that is not located in an accessible site, the Department of Education will take reasonable steps to make the program accessible.

Q. What if my child attends a District 75 middle school program?

- A. Students in District 75 programs that continue to require a District 75 program do not participate in the High School Admissions Process. They are notified of their high school placement in May or June by their District 75 school. Students in District 75 inclusion programs remaining in District 75 inclusion programs will participate in a District 75 administered application process for high school inclusion programs. Applications are provided by your District 75 school and are due in December. You will be notified of your child's placement in early spring.

There are students attending District 75 middle schools who are preparing to transition into a community high school. These students should participate in the High School Admissions Process. However, prior to being placed in a community high school these students will need to have an IEP meeting to develop a new IEP that will recommend special education services in a community high school. It is important to speak with the school psychologist, your child's teachers, and the entire IEP team to discuss if a community school program is appropriate for your child.

Q. If my child is in District 75 and I am not sure whether he/she will continue to need a District 75 program for high school, should my child apply for a community school through the regular High School Admissions Process? What do I do about his/her IEP? Who makes the decision regarding whether he/she will leave District 75?

- A. Yes, the student may participate in the High School Admissions Process. The student will be matched to a high school that is not a District 75 school through the regular High School Admissions Process.

However, your child must be reevaluated by the IEP Team prior to the end of the 8th grade to determine appropriate special education services for your child. The IEP Team may

recommend that your child remain in a District 75 program, in which case the non-District 75 high school offer is automatically voided.

Q. What is the process for students attending a New York State approved non-public school serving students with disabilities?

- A. Students attending New York State approved non-public schools serving students with disabilities have annual reviews each spring to determine the appropriate placement for the next school year. If the student is in the 8th grade and the school has a high school program, the CSE may recommend continued placement in that school.

If the current school does not have a high school program and it is determined at the IEP meeting that the special education services that the student requires cannot be met in a public school program, the case will be deferred to the Central Based Support Team (CBST). This Team will identify an appropriate high school program for the student.

If it is determined that the student is ready to transition to a less restrictive setting in a public school, the student will be advised to apply through the regular High School Admissions Process.

Q. What if my child is currently attending a New York State approved non-public school serving students with disabilities, but I would like my child to attend a public high school?

- A. You should raise this issue at your child's annual review. If it is determined that your child's needs may be met in a public high school, an IEP with this recommendation should be developed and your child should apply to high school through the regular High School Admission Process.

CONTACT INFORMATION FOR PARENTS

For Additional Information about the High School Admissions Process
Please Contact the New York City Department of Education
Office of Student Enrollment

Telephone: (212) 374-2363 Fax: (212) 374-5568

<http://schools.nyc.gov/ChoicesEnrollment/NewStudents/Borough+Enrollment+Offices.htm>

You may visit any of the following Enrollment Offices

Borough	Districts Served	Address
Bronx	7, 9, 10	1 Fordham Plaza, 7th Floor, Bronx, NY 10458
Bronx	8, 11, 12	1230 Zerega Avenue, Bronx, NY 10462
Brooklyn	17, 18, 22	1780 Ocean Avenue, Brooklyn, NY 11230
Brooklyn	20, 21	415 89th Street, Brooklyn, NY 11209
Brooklyn	13, 14, 15, 16	29 Fort Greene Place, Brooklyn, NY 11217
Brooklyn	19, 23, 32	1665 St. Mark's Avenue, Brooklyn, NY 11233
Manhattan	1, 2, 4	333 Seventh Avenue, 12th Floor, New York, NY 10001
Manhattan	3, 5, 6	388 West 125th Street, 7th Floor, New York, NY 10027
Queens	24, 30	28-11 Queens Plaza North, Long Island City, NY 11101
Queens	25, 26	30-48 Linden Place, Flushing, NY 11354
Queens	27	82-01 Rockaway Boulevard, Ozone Park, NY 11416
Queens	28, 29	90-27 Sutphin Boulevard, Jamaica, NY 11435
Staten Island	31	715 Ocean Terrace, Building A, Staten Island, NY 10301

Joel I. Klein, Chancellor
www.nyc.gov/schools or call 311