



The Private School Option *for Students with Disabilities*

WHAT PARENTS **NEED**
TO KNOW!



NEW JERSEY ASSOCIATION OF
SPECIAL EDUCATION
PARTNER SCHOOLS

Letter from the **EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR**

Here at the **New Jersey Association of Special Education Partner Schools (NJASEPS)**, 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 NJASEPS 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.

NJASEPS 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
New Jersey Association of Special Education
Partner Schools (NJASEPS)

A History of **SUCCESS**

SINCE 1985, 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+ NJASEPS 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 NJASEPS 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 ongoing support and services as adults
- Mobility training

A woman with dark hair, wearing a white hairnet and a white apron over a pink t-shirt, is smiling warmly at the camera. She is standing in a bakery, with metal shelving units filled with various items in the background. In the foreground, a tray of small, round, golden-brown pastries is visible on a dark surface.

“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 NJASEPS 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 Toolkit 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 **NJASEPS.org**

Call **(609) 890-1400**

NJASEPS 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

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

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ABOUT **NJASEPS**

The New Jersey Association of Special Education Partner Schools (NJASEPS), formerly known as ASAH, is a nonprofit organization representing New Jersey's private special education schools that provide highly specialized services to more than 10,000 infants, children, and young adults with disabilities.

Our mission is to advance high-quality special education through effective practices, informed policy, and strong partnerships that enhance outcomes and quality of life for individuals with disabilities and their families.

For more information or assistance, please contact us:



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