

Arlington Central School District

Special Education Office, 144 Todd Hill Road, Lagrangeville, NY 12540 Tel: 845.486.4494

The Committee on Preschool Special Education (CPSE)

The Committee on Preschool Special Education (CPSE) is responsible for identifying preschool students with disabilities (around ages 3-5 years old) and recommending special education services to eligible students. A preschool student with a disability is one who, as determined by a multidisciplinary evaluation, exhibits a significant delay or disorder in one or more functional areas related to cognitive, language and communication, adaptive, social-emotional, or motor development which adversely affects the student's ability to participate appropriately in activities. A wide range of related services and special education programs are available to meet the educational needs of preschool students with disabilities. Preschool students with disabilities are entitled to receive a free appropriate public education (FAPE) in the least restrictive environment (LRE).

The Special Education Process involves five steps:

1. Initial Referral for Special Education Services and registration in the Arlington Central School District.
2. Individualized Evaluation Process through parent selected, state approved, preschool evaluator.
3. Initial Eligibility Determination Meeting held by the CPSE.
4. Individualized Education Plan developed and recommended at CPSE meeting.
5. Annual Review to determine functional level and/or goals and services.

1. Initial Referral for Special Education Services:

A referral is made to the CPSE when the parent/guardian of a preschool age student feels the student may require special education services. The referral must be in writing, directed to the Supervisor of CPSE/ CPSE chairperson, and include the student's name and date of birth, the parent's/guardian's name, address, home and work phone numbers. The referral should briefly describe the concerns which prompted them to make the referral. Registration information will be provided to the parent/guardian to complete registration. The consent for evaluation form, a list of the State approved evaluation agencies, as well as a copy of the Procedural Safeguards Notice will be sent to the parent/guardian once the preschool age student is formally registered. Evaluations can only take place once the student is registered in the Arlington Central School District and the selected agency is contacted by the district to start the evaluation process.

The Supervisor of CPSE/CPSE chairperson is available to the parent/guardian prior to or during the referral/evaluation process in order to answer questions, to assist the parent/guardian in understanding how the CPSE system works, and to help in completing all the paperwork involved.

2. Individualized Evaluation Process: A preschool student can only be evaluated after the student's parent/guardian has given their written consent for the evaluation to occur. The parent/guardian has the right to choose from the list of approved evaluators they would like to evaluate their child. The evaluations help the Committee decide if the student needs special education services and are required to determine initial eligibility. Evaluations are completed only by certified professionals, who will explain in detail the results of all their testing. The multidisciplinary evaluations will include:

Social History: The parent/guardian will be asked to provide information about the student's developmental history (e.g., first words, when he/she first crawled and walked, age of toilet training, etc.) as well as general family information.

Physical Exam: Required by state law, this is a general assessment of the student's health, vision and hearing, and immunization record. This information will be gathered from the student's physician.

Psychological Evaluation: Administered by a psychologist, these tests help determine the student's learning potential as well as educational strengths and needs.

Other: Comprehensive tests to identify the student's specific needs, such as speech and language, physical and/or occupational therapies, may be administered.

Observation: A professional from the parent/guardian selected agency will observe the student in his or her home, daycare, community or educational setting.

All testing will be provided at no cost to the parent/guardian.

The parent/guardian have the right to withdraw his/her consent for the evaluation at any time in the process. Once parental consent is withdrawn, the CPSE process stops.

3. Determining Eligibility: Upon completion of the evaluations, which should be within 60 days from receipt of consent for evaluations, a CPSE meeting will be scheduled. The parent/guardian will be notified of the meeting location, date and time in writing. The meeting will be attended by the Supervisor of CPSE/CPSE chairperson; the parent/guardian of the student; and an appropriately certified or licensed professional from the evaluation agency. Attendance of the appointee of the municipality is not required for a quorum. When a student is transitioning from the Early Intervention System, the student's Ongoing Service Coordinator is invited to attend the initial CPSE meeting. In addition, the parent/guardian is welcome to invite anyone they wish, who has knowledge of the student or special expertise relating to the student's disability, to attend the meeting with them.

The Committee reviews all current evaluations and other relevant information and makes a determination regarding whether the student has an educational disability. If such a disability is found, the CPSE develops an Individualized Educational Plan (IEP) which includes recommendations for appropriate goals, special education programs and/or services. Recommendations must take into account the least restrictive environment, the student's academic/educational needs, the student's social and physical development and the student's management needs. This recommendation is then forwarded to the Board of Education and provided in writing to the parent/guardian. The parent/guardian is required to give written consent before the recommended plan can be initiated. If the parent/guardian disagrees with the decision of the Committee, the parent/guardian may exercise due process rights outlined in the Procedural Safeguard Notice and request mediation or an Impartial Hearing.

Please note it is imperative for children receiving Early Intervention (EI) Services to have their initial eligibility determination meeting held prior to their 3rd birthday to prevent lapse in services. A child's eligibility for continued EI services end the day before the child's 3rd birthday unless the child has been found eligible for preschool special education services.

The purpose of the initial CPSE meeting is to review the student's evaluations and any other relevant information in order to determine whether the student has an educational disability and is eligible for preschool special education services.

There are specific guidelines the CPSE must use to assess whether a student is eligible for classification and services. Specifically, the CPSE must determine whether the student demonstrates a significant delay or disorder in one or more of the following five functioning areas:

- Cognitive (intellectual processing skills)
- Language and Communication Development
- Adaptive (self-help skills, eating, toileting, etc.)
- Social-Emotional Development
- Motor Development

A significant delay is defined as a 33% delay in one area OR two 25% delays OR a 12 month delay in one or more areas OR 2.0 standard deviations below the mean OR two 1.5 standard deviations below the mean in the above areas.

If the preschool student has been determined to be ineligible for special education the Committee recommendation shall indicate the reasons the student was found to be ineligible. A copy of the recommendation shall be provided to the parent/guardian.

If found eligible, all preschool students are given the same classification: Preschool Student with a Disability.

Once the determination is made that a preschool student possesses an educational disability and is eligible for special education services, recommendations are made by the CPSE to address the student's special education needs. When considering program options for a student, the CPSE must consider the least restrictive environment; that is, the setting which is most natural for the preschool-aged student while still meeting his/her needs. The range of programs and services available to preschool students are as follows:

Related Services: Services can include, but are not limited to speech/language therapy, physical therapy, occupational therapy, and counseling. These services are delivered in a CPSE recommended location (i.e., preschool or day care, therapy office, etc.) and are provided by a trained professional.

Special Education Itinerant Services (SEIS): A special education itinerant teacher (SEIT) will travel to the student (at the student's preschool, daycare or home) to provide individual or group instruction and/or indirect services in which the special education teacher works with the student's preschool teacher on a consultant basis to help meet the student's needs.

Special Class in an Integrated Setting (SCIS): This option refers to a special class of no more than 12 preschool students with disabilities which is staffed by at least one special education teacher and one aide or assistant, and includes non-disabled preschool students in either a full day or half day model. Individual and/or group therapy services are incorporated into the program as needed.

Special Class (SC): This option refers to a self-contained preschool class offering comprehensive services and delivered by professionals with expertise in special education. A special class can consist of no more than 12 preschool students with disabilities per teacher, plus an aide or assistant with full day and half options dependent on student's needs. Individual and/or group therapy services, as needed, are incorporated into this program.

4. Individualized Education Plan:

As a result of the CPSE meeting, an Individual Education Plan (IEP) is developed and a copy is sent to the parent/guardian. This is a written document that summarizes the student's abilities in the five functioning areas and details the exact nature of the special education goals and services recommended for the student, including the type of program recommended, the start date and duration, types of related services and frequency, specialized equipment and/or specialized transportation needs, and the location where services will be provided.

The CPSE, along with the parents/guardians arrange for the provision of all services recommended in the IEP. The service providers involved implement the recommended services. If at any time the student's parent/guardian or the professionals involved feel changes need to be made in the student's special education program, they can request that a CPSE meeting be held to address their concerns.

5. Annual Review:

The CPSE must meet at least annually to review the student's progress and revise the IEP as appropriate. These meetings are generally held from March through June. The CPSE must provide written notification to the parent/guardian of the annual review meeting including date, time and location. As a student ages out of the CPSE process, the annual review meetings will be combined with the Committee on Special Education (CSE) meeting, if the student potentially needs to continue with special education services in Kindergarten.

***For more information regarding special education please refer to Parents Guide to Special Education under Special Education tab on the Arlington Central School District Website under Pupil Personnel Services.**

***For a preschool registration packet please refer to Student Registration tab on the Arlington Central School District Website under Pupil Personnel Services.**

***Please refer to the Arlington Central School District Facebook page for ongoing events in the county for students with all abilities.**