

Red Hook Central School District
9 Mill Road
Red Hook, NY 12571

Preschool Special Education

The New York State Education Department (SED), Office of Elementary, Middle, Secondary and Continuing Education (MSC) oversees a statewide preschool special education program with school districts, municipalities, approved providers and parents. Evaluations and specially planned individual or group instructional services or programs are provided to eligible children who have a disability that affects their learning. Funding for these special education program and services is provided by municipalities and the State.

Every school district has a CPSE and a CSE that decide a child's special education needs and services The CPSE is responsible for children with disabilities ages 3-5. The CSE is responsible for children with disabilities ages 5-21. You are a member of the Committee that will recommend special education services for your child.

You know your child better than anyone else and you have valuable knowledge to bring to Committee discussions. Other members of the Committees are people who have a broad range of experiences planning for and/or working with students with disabilities. Together you will work to make sure that special education programs and services are provided to meet your child's needs.

How will I know if my preschool-age needs special education?

The Referral

If your child received early intervention services as an infant or toddler up to age three, and may still need special education, your service coordinator will assist you with transition planning and making a referral to the Committee on Preschool Special Education (CPSE).

If your preschool-age child (3-5 years old) did not receive early intervention services, but has some delays or lags in development such as difficulty in talking, moving around, thinking, or learning or is facing physical or behavioral challenges—you, or professionals who know your child, may make a referral to the chairperson for Red Hook's CSPE who will assist you in completing the referral process. In Red Hook, the CPSE is Jack Costello (758-2241 ext. 56100).

The CPSE must include: the parent of the child, a regular education teacher (if the child is or may be participating in the regular education environment), a special education teacher or related service provider, the CPSE chairperson, an individual who can interpret evaluation results, other individuals who have knowledge or special expertise about the child, and a licensed or certified professional from the Department of Health's Early Intervention Program (for a child in transition from the Early Intervention Program). A certified or licensed preschool representative from the municipality must be notified of scheduled meetings; however, the CPSE meetings can be held whether or not the municipal representative attends.

The Evaluation Process

After your child is referred for an evaluation for special education, you will be asked to give your written consent to have your child evaluated. The results of an evaluation help determine if special education services or programs are needed. An evaluation includes various assessments tools and strategies. These tests determine what your child's learning difficulties may be and how those difficulties affect her or his participation and progress in the general education curriculum. This evaluation is at no cost to you. As a

parent, it will be helpful to share with the Committee any important information you have about your child's skills, abilities and needs, including copies of any evaluations you have on your child.

An initial evaluation to determine your child's needs must include:

- A physical examination (usually a form completed by the pediatrician).
- A psychological evaluation (mandatory for pre-school children).
- A social history
- Observation of your child in his or her current education setting.
- Other tests or assessments that are appropriate for your child (such as a speech and language assessment or a physical therapy evaluation, etc.)

The parents of preschool children will receive a packet of information from Red Hook CSD and be asked to select an approved evaluator from a list of evaluations sites and provide consent for the evaluations. If you have concerns about providing consent, you may speak with Donna Schulte, Psy. D. If you do not provide consent for your preschool child (ages 3-5) to be evaluated, the CPSE will take steps to make sure that you have received and understand the request for consent for evaluation of your child but the district may not go forward without your consent.

The CPSE will also give you a copy of the due process Procedural Safeguard Notice. If your child's evaluation is not timely or, if you disagree with the evaluation results or the recommendation of the CPSE, you have the right to ask for an independent evaluation, mediation or an impartial hearing.

A copy of the evaluation report, including a summary of the evaluation, will be provided to you and to other CPSE members. You will be asked to meet with them to talk about the evaluation results.

If the CSPE finds your child is not eligible for special education programs and/or services, you will be given the reasons for the decision in writing.

What happens after the individual evaluation?

After the evaluation is completed, you will be invited to a CPSE meeting, as a member of the Committee, to talk about the results. You should attend this meeting because you have important information to share about your child. If you cannot attend, you have the right to ask the district to change the time or pace of the meeting. At the meeting, the Committee will review the evaluations results. Base on that information, and information that you provide, the Committee decides if your child is eligible or ineligible to receive special education programs and/or services.

In order to be eligible, your child must have a disability that affects his or her ability to learn. In New York State, a child ages 3-5, may be identified as a "preschool student with a disability" if the CPSE identifies the child as having a disability because of mental, physical or emotional reason. Preschool students must meet one of the eligibility criteria to be determined eligible as a child with a disability who requires special education. The criteria are described in section 200.1(mm) of the Regulations of the Commissioner of Education. Section 200.1 says that to be identified as having a disability a preschool student shall either:

- (i) Exhibit a significant delay or disorder in one or more functional areas related to cognitive, language and communicative, adaptive, socio-emotional or motor development which adversely affects the

student's ability to learn. The delay or disorder is documented by the results of the individual evaluation and indicates:

- (a) A 12-month delay in one or more functional area(s); or
- (b) A 33 percent delay in one functional area, or 25 percent delay in each of the two functional areas; or
- (c) A score of 2.0 standard deviation below the mean in one functional area, or a score of 1.5 standard deviations below the mean in each of two functional areas.

If you have any questions about the process or procedures for CPSE, please don't hesitate to contact Mr. Jack Costello, CPSE Chairperson at the number/email listed below.

Jack Costello
CPSE Chairperson
(845) 758-2241 ext. 56100
(845) 758-0361 Fax
jcostello@rhcsd.org