

How to Locate a Non-Public School for Your Child

If the IEP team has agreed that the most appropriate school setting for your child is a non-public school (“NPS”), you can and should play a primary role in locating a good school and ensuring timely placement of your child in that school. Effective follow-up on NPS placement requires the following steps.

- * Some school districts such as LAUSD provide you the names of several schools to investigate for placement. If after investigation, none of these schools is satisfactory, the district can provide you with more names. If the school district does not offer you names of suggested NPS placements, ask the district to provide some. You can also locate NPS placements on your own on the Internet at <http://www.cde.ca.gov/re/sd/>
- * Before contacting a school, make sure you have a full set of your child’s current IEP records, including the IEP that designates NPS.
- * Contact the school by telephone. When you do, ask about the following space availability in the school for the grade level and service needs of your child; and whether the school’s bus transportation route areas include the area in which your child resides.
- * If there is space available and transportation is not an issue, make an appointment to observe the school and the specific classroom in which your child will be placed.
- * Should you decide that you want your child to go to a particular school, the school will want to do an intake interview with you and your child. You should keep this in mind when setting up observations and interviews. If transportation is an issue, you might want to ask about combining the observation and intake interview. Or, you can ask the district to provide transportation or reimburse you for costs.
- * Try to make the observation appointment sooner rather than later so as to avoid the available spaces being filled before you observe the school.
- * If at all possible, have backup transportation arrangements available so that you do not fail to keep the appointment because of transportation difficulties. Failure to keep appointments at a school can jeopardize your child’s likelihood of being accepted.
- * On the day of your appointment before you leave for the school, call the school again to reconfirm that space availability still exists and that the appointment time remains firm. Schools can have unexpected changes such as teacher absences and special event days which were not taken into account when you originally scheduled your appointment.
- * Remember to take your child’s documents to the appointment so that you can show the school the IEP that designates NPS placement. This is true even if you have previously faxed or mailed copies of the documents to the school.
- * If the school is satisfactory, finalize arrangements (including the intake interview if you have not already done it) and determine a start date. Ask the school to give you that date in writing and initial it on your copy of the IEP.