



"ENSURE YOUR CHILD GETS THE EDUCATION NEEDED AND DESERVED"

PRESENTED BY: JACOB D. VERCHEREAU, ESQ.

WELCOME!

- Please note your lines are **muted**
- Type questions in the **Q&A pod** at the bottom of your screen
- **Presentation** and materials to be posted at www.pierrolaw.com/resources
- Both **videos** from these programs will be shared soon!
- Complete the **feedback survey** following the program

INTRODUCTION

Shannon Boreali
Program Manager

Best Buddies International



JACOB D. VERCHEREAU, ESQ.

- Introduction, Background as CSE Advocate and Attorney
- Associate Attorney, Pierro, Connor & Strauss
- In prior roles, worked for Manhattan-based law firm advocating for students with disabilities
- Earned J.D. at Albany Law School
- B.A., Manhattan College
- Hometown: Troy, NY



AGENDA

- School District's legal obligations: FAPE
- Understanding the Acronyms: CSE, IEP, IESP, 504 Plan
- The difference between an IEP and 504
- Preparing for CSE Meetings

OPEN FORUM



SPECIAL EDUCATION AND YOUR CHILD: OVERVIEW

School District: legal obligation to provide an appropriate program

- More resources than parents
- Team of attorneys, psychologists, administrators

Parents: often the 'Underdog' and Advocate

- Preparation and knowledge are Key.

Springtime: Annual meetings take place to finalize the Program for the following school year

WHAT IS “FAPE?”

Free Appropriate Public Education

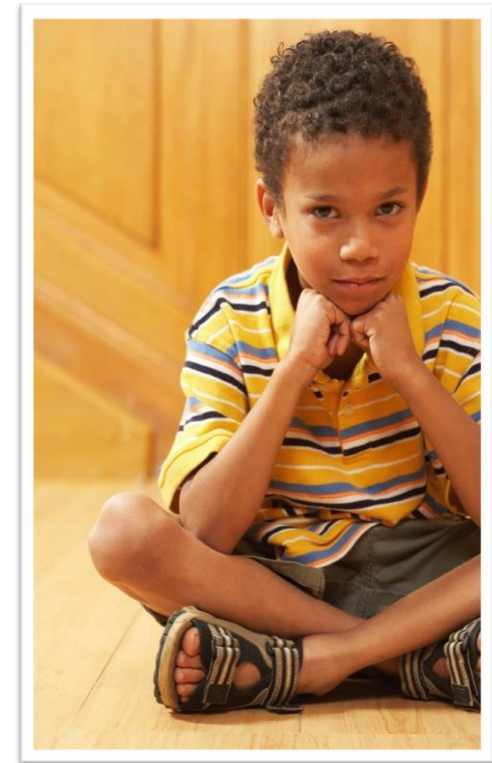
A – “Appropriate.” It does not mean “Optimal”

- School districts are not required to maximize a child's academic progress
- What does it mean to be “appropriate” ?

CASE LAW: WHAT IS “MEANINGFUL PROGRESS?”

**A child must make ‘meaningful progress’
across all areas.**

- Academic
- Social
- Emotional
- Behavioral



SCHOOL ACRONYMS

Special Education can be a “Foreign Language” to parents

F.B.A.

I.E.P.

C.S.E.

I.E.S.P.

B.I.P.

I.D.E.A.

F.A.P.E.

I.E.E.

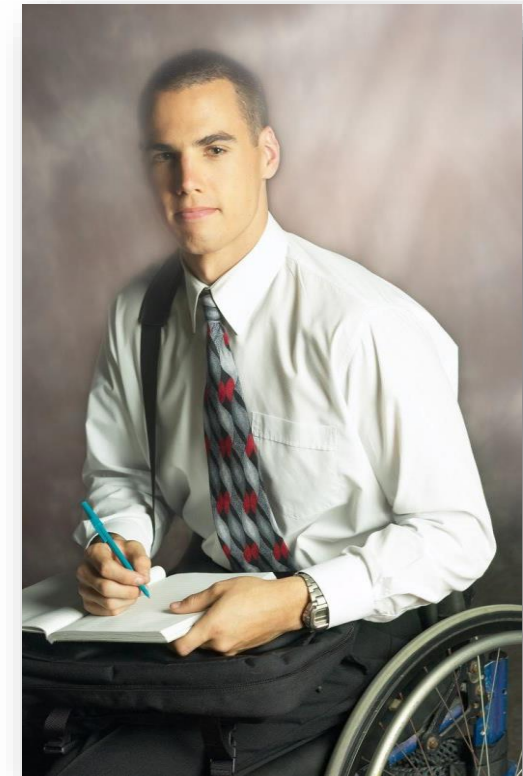
504

COMMITTEE ON SPECIAL EDUCATION

Meeting *at least once a year*

Convened to review your child's program

- Parents face multiple school district staff
- Intimidation (Parents vs. A Bunch of Professionals)
- Development of the Individualized Education Program, "IEP"



HOW TO PREPARE FOR YOUR C.S.E.



Jacob's Top Ten Tips to a Successful Outcome

1. EVALUATIONS

Consider having your child privately evaluated

- Some insurance will cover it

Request an Independent Educational Evaluation - “IEE”

- Funded by District

Evaluation shows where child is struggling and their functional levels

- Includes recommendations
- Written report provided to parents prior to the CSE

2. PAPER TRIAL

Parents Should Write to the CSE Rather Than Call

Make Sure You Have a Paper Trail

- Put concerns in writing
- Summarize info discussed in phone calls with an email after the call

Don't Wait Until a Meeting to Air Issues

- Puts district on defensive
- Less likely to have productive conversations



3. INVITE PEOPLE TO YOUR CSE

You Have the Legal Right to Invite Anyone

- Private Evaluator
- Therapist
- Doctor
- Tutor
- Family Members

Accommodations Can Be Made Available:

- In Person
- By Zoom
- By Phone

4. BRING AN ADVOCATE OR AN ATTORNEY

It's an Emotional and Personal Process

Don't be intimidated by 5-10 District staff

Consider including an Advocate or Attorney

- Translate technical terms
- Knows your child's rights
- More objective; can challenge or negotiate without emotion

5. ASSERT YOURSELF

- State your concerns
- Do not agree just to be nice
- Ask for more information
- If you don't agree to terms, ask for more time
- If needed, get a second opinion



6. ONE CSE MEETING IS NOT ALL YOU GET

- One annual meeting with the District is not the only one you are allowed
- Parents can call for a new CSE meeting at any time
- No time limit on length of meeting

7. TRIENNIAL REEVALUATIONS



By law, a student must be evaluated a minimum of every 3 years.

8. RIGHT TO PENDENCY

If child's program gets changed and you disagree: Assert Pendency

- Program cannot be changed until you are granted a hearing has concluded
- Allows child to get "last agreed-upon program" for up to another year or more

9. TAKE GOOD NOTES

Bring someone to CSE to take notes

- Allows you to focus and participate
- The notes can be compared to the new IEP to ensure all services and supports made it into the IEP



HOW TO READ AND INTERPRET THE IEP

The 3 Key Sections Are:

- A. Present Levels of Performance
- B. Recommended Special Education Program and Services – Example: “15 : 1+1”
- C. Measurable Goals



10. FOLLOW UP AND SUMMARIZE



Following your CSE Meeting:

- Summarize discussion and decision in writing
- Once you receive the IEP, detail corrections or disagreements
- Send correspondence to the CSE

THANK YOU! AND THANKS, BEST BUDDIES!



- Phone: 866-951-7526
- Email: info@pierrolaw.com

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Contact:

newyork@bestbuddies.org

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