



Integrated Classes for Students with High Functioning Autism

The *New York City Department of Education* lists a variety of specialized programs that are not currently expected to exist in every public school. Each public school does have the capacity to serve students with disabilities. But, the Department of Education has specialized programs that can more effectively teach students with the Autism Spectrum Disorder, students with intellectual disabilities, or English language learners. (<http://schools.nyc.gov/default.htm>)

The following are currently considered specialized programs:

- ASD Nest – an integrated class setting in a community school for high functioning students on the autism spectrum.
- ASD Horizon – a self-contained class in a community school for students on the autism spectrum.
- Barrier Free – a school building that is accessible to students who have limited mobility, serious health issues, or use a wheelchair or other mobility device. Schools that are designed in accordance with the Americans with Disabilities Act Accessibility Guidelines (ADAAG) meet the highest standard of accessibility.
- Bilingual Special Education – a special class for students who are recommended to receive services in a bilingual classroom (Spanish, Chinese, Russian, Yiddish, or Haitian Creole).
- Special Program for students with ID classification – a special class or program in a community school for students who are classified as intellectually disabled and who are being alternately assessed.

Pathfinders for Autism

Educational Recommendations for Autism Spectrum Disorder

(<http://www.pathfindersforautism.org/articles/view/educational-recommendations-for-autism-spectrum-disorders>)

1. Educational Setting
The child requires a highly structured program with a small class size and a student to teacher ratio that permits personalized attention. Children with autism need routine and adult-directed tasks in order to understand instructions.
2. Functional Skills
Special attention must be given to math and reading. It is important to focus on the relevance of information to the individuals' functionality in the real world. Teaching real life situations is important.

Individualized Educational Support Strategies for Students with Autism in Inclusive Classroom Settings (http://www.sig.hawaii.edu/products/briefs/EPB_Autism.pdf)
There are several strategies a teacher can enforce to help students with individual needs and learning styles within a regular classroom.

1. Teach communication and social competence
Include social skills practice and role-play in individual, self-directed student activities for students with autism.
2. Including personalized IEP goals into the natural flow of classroom instruction.
Create an assignment that was originally created for the whole class and include one or two goals from students IEP. For example, create a small matching assignment for a student with autism who is working on matching emotional states.
3. Teaching and providing opportunities for independence.
Give students with autism the freedom to explore, interact with peers and participate in general education activities. Classroom aides are there to support the students but it is essential to make sure they don't become dependent.
4. Creating a classroom environment that includes all children.
Create activities that involve all students with a range of abilities that are open ended and support different responses. Group activities promotes student membership by ensuring every child has a role.
5. Generalizing and maintaining new skills.
New skills need to be created over a period of time. Apply new skills and activities that are available in the general education classroom.

Aboutourkids.org – School Inclusion for Children with Autism Spectrum Disorders
(http://www.aboutourkids.org/articles/school_inclusion_children_autism_spectrum_disorders)

After the child has been evaluated and his doctors, parents and teachers have created an IEP, there is a range of academic supports available to children with autism. Classroom modifications are often adequate to meet the needs of less challenged students. These may include:

- Preferential seating in a teacher's "target zone"
- Modifying homework and in-class assignments
- Providing extra time on tests and class assignments
- Offering an extra set of books to children with organizational problems to help ensure they have the materials they need to complete assignments both at home and at school.

School of Education at John Hopkins University – Inclusion of Students with Autism Spectrum Disorders
(<http://education.jhu.edu/PD/newhorizons/Exceptional%20Learners/Autism/Articles/Inclusion%20of%20Students%20with%20Autism%20Spectrum%20Disorder>)

Successful programs incorporated by school systems are guided by the idea that all students learn differently. Each student should be educated in a specific manner that

will benefit the individual. Not one program will benefit all students including those with ASD.

Autism and Thoughtful Inclusion – Autism Support Network

(<http://www.autismsupportnetwork.com/news/autism-and-thoughtful-inclusion-446723>)

“I do think “inclusion” is much more realistic for many in elementary school and becomes increasingly unrealistic for many of our more socially challenged learners in middle school and high school not only due to the social complexities of this age group but also because of the social abstractions taught through the curriculum.”

Inclusion Strategies for Students with Autism Spectrum Disorders – Reaching every learner: Differentiating instruction in theory and practice

(<http://www.learnnc.org/lp/editions/every-learner/6692>)

“Teaching **social skills** to students with ASD is extremely important, and is beneficial not only for the student but for classmates as well. Classmates have been known to benefit from their experiences with students with ASD, developing a compassion for and an understanding of children with special needs. Their self-esteem is boosted by the positive role they take in helping a friend with autism learn.”

Danya – Free Autism Educational Resources

(https://www.danya.com/products_autism.asp) Includes YouTube videos and PDF Workbooks

- Autism Vision: Creating Classroom Connections for Children with Autism
- Autism Vision: Creating Classroom Connections for Children with High-functioning Autism or Asperger's
- Autism Vision: Creating Classroom Connections for Teens with High-functioning Autism or Asperger's
- Autism Vision: Creating Classroom Connections for Teens with Autism
- Autism Vision: Creating Autism Awareness in Elementary School Staff
- Supporting Transition in Vocation and Education (STRIVE)
- Caring for Caregivers: For Groups of Caregivers of Young Children with ASD
- Caring for Caregivers: For Groups of Caregivers of School Aged Children with ASD
- Caring for Caregivers: For Groups of Caregivers of Adolescents and Young Adults with ASD
- Caring for Caregivers: For Groups of Caregivers of Adults with ASD

Autism 4 Teachers

(http://www.autism4teachers.com/autism4teachers_008.htm)

Social skills games, website, curriculums, etc.

Inclusion Support – Autism Action Partnership

(<http://www.autismaction.org/resource-center/educators/inclusion-support>)

Various resource websites for educators/students in an inclusion classroom.