

# THE SPECIAL EDUCATION ADVISORY



Midland Park Public Schools,  
Midland Park, New Jersey

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## ***Benefits of a Least Restrictive Environment***

What is the Least Restrictive Environment (LRE)? LRE is part of the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA) which states that children who receive special education should learn in the least restrictive class setting. This means they should spend as much time as possible with peers who do not receive special education. The Child Study Team follows the federal guidelines under IDEA to ensure students are placed in the LRE. This action further ensures certain students with disabilities are educated with their non-disabled peers to every extent possible. In Midland Park, our students are always included in general education classes for art, physical education, library, music, and lunch. The majority of our students are enrolled in general education, collaborative classes co-taught by two teachers—a general education teacher and a special education teacher.

We are committed to the premise that every child is unique and has their own individual strengths and weaknesses, therefore, instruction is differentiated to best meet the needs of all learners.



*A collaborative class in action at Godwin School.*

Here are some tips for parent with regard to placement in the LRE and IEP development:

- *Remain aware of your child's evolving strengths and weaknesses and stay in frequent communication with teachers and the Child Study Team (CST.)*
- *Welcome teacher and CST input in making LRE decisions (Example: A child may have a love for science, but struggles with reading comprehension. Therefore, it may be beneficial to support placement in a collaborative science class with instructional supports. The goal is to have a student enjoy the topic/subject, be included, and achieve by doing their best.*
- *Work collaboratively with teachers and the CST to discuss options, supports, and accommodations.*
- *For parents who have a child in an out-of-district placement, know that the child may return to Midland Park for extra-curricular activities.*



### ***Web-based Resources for Parents & Families***

[www.mpsnj.org](http://www.mpsnj.org)

<https://www.state.nj.us/education/code/current/title6a/chap14.pdf>

<https://www.state.nj.us/education/specialed/form/prise/prise.pdf>

<https://www.nj.gov/education/specialed/>

<https://sites.ed.gov/idea/>

## **CELEBRATING OUR STUDENTS!**

### *"Pass the Torch," Side-by-Side Torch Run for Special Olympics*

Midland Park students Jayme Kajajian and Peter Gizzi represented our district at the Special Olympics of Bergen County Pass the Torch event earlier this year. This inaugural side-by-side torch run was coordinated by the Maywood Police Department and hosted by the Maywood Public School District. Special education students from 40 Bergen County districts participated in the hand-to-hand run to kick off New Jersey's Special Olympic Games of 2019. We're so very proud of Jayme and Peter...they did a great job representing our district and celebrated their achievement with county peers at a barbecue following the run.



*Jayme celebrating with his certificate from the Special Olympics Committee.*



*Peter and Jayme with officers of the Maywood Police Department (left.) Jayme passing the torch to another county student (right.)*



## **WHAT TO DO WHEN THE SCHOOL DAY ENDS**



Regardless of a disability, students may be included in extra-curricular afterschool activities, such as sports, art and dance classes, and group social activities. These endeavors build confidence, encourage socialization, facilitates friendships and peer relationships, and encourage the development of positive self-esteem. Parents may wish to consider extra-curricular activities for their child after school or during the weekend. In doing so, first determine your child's interests and abilities with the group or activity you are considering. If the program is competitive in nature, determine if your child has developed appropriate sportsmanship such as winning or losing a game. For more information, visit the Midland Park Special Services website and discuss options with your child's teacher and case manager.

## **MEET OUR DIRECTOR AND CHILD STUDY TEAM MEMBERS**

*(from left to right)*

*Ms. Emily Trent,  
School Psychologist*



*Mrs. Jennifer Liss, School Social Worker*

*Ms. Pamela Vermaas, Learning Disabilities  
Teacher Consultant*

*Dr. Cathy Prinsell, School Psychologist*

*Mrs. Christy Kearney, Learning Disabilities  
Teacher Consultant*

*Mrs. Ann Marie Bruder, Director of Special  
Services*