



MISSION & VISION

The members of the Action for Reform in Special Education (ARISE) Coalition have joined together to provide a collective and powerful voice in support of students with disabilities and learning differences in New York City public schools. We seek to improve day-to-day experiences and long-term outcomes for these students and champion systemic reform to:

- » Improve “special education” services;
- » Assure meaningful inclusion and integration;
- » Promote greater transparency and accountability;
- » Mitigate practices that lead to discrimination and disproportionality in rates of referral, suspension, and segregated placements; and
- » Increase positive outcomes and options for all students.

To that end, we call for the New York City Department of Education (DOE) to:

1. Reform decision making practices across all DOE structures, from Central through the boroughs, districts and individual schools, to assure that all students with disabilities—regardless of classification, grade, or language of origin—are considered at the outset on all policy and budgetary matters.
2. Guarantee that each child with a disability receives specialized instruction and services, including assistive and adaptive technology, literacy instruction, and appropriate physical, social and behavioral supports, in all areas of identified need.
3. Guarantee that each school is prepared to offer affirmative school-wide supports and interventions to address behavioral needs and literacy needs of all students using, for example, restorative justice practices to address discipline issues in our schools.
4. Provide the critical resources for on-site training and on-going support for school-wide best practices to identify, include and accommodate students with a range of disabilities.
5. Provide equal and equitable social and physical access to school sites and programs for all students with special needs and their families pre-k through age 21, particularly at key articulation points (for students entering kindergarten, middle and high school).
6. Promote parity of space, design, and resources in all co-located facilities to ensure that students with disabilities have equal access.
7. Create structures to ensure robust transition planning to ensure all students with disabilities are college and/or career ready and have the adult life skills and self-advocacy capabilities to successfully navigate the path they choose to follow after graduation from high school.
8. Ensure that parents receive real-time, complete, and accurate information in the language of the family’s choice regarding their rights, their individual students’ needs and abilities, school choice, and service delivery.
9. Create and widely publicize a user-friendly navigation path within the DOE for families seeking support to address rights violations and unmet students’ needs.
10. Institute transparent lines of accountability to document student progress and service delivery (or lack thereof) through the development of a system-wide monitoring structure (including currently planned upgrades to SESIS) that makes such data and outcomes available to families.