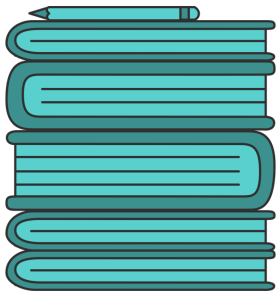


The ASD Nest Program

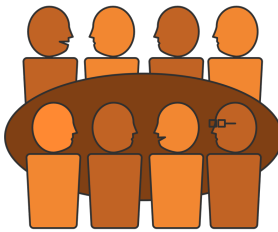
The ASD Nest program is a public school inclusion program for students with ASD. The components of the program can be best understood through examining the classroom supports used, the collaborative and system-wide structures in place, and the philosophical foundation that influences all structures and supports.



Classroom Supports

All classes in the ASD Nest program implement a distinct set of practices to best supports the learners on the autism spectrum.

- Social, sensory, behavioral, and academic strategies support the successful functioning of students in inclusive classrooms
- Class-wide strategies form a foundational level of support; individualized strategies are developed as necessary for students with greater needs
- Therapeutic classroom, with related services integrated seamlessly
- Landmark documents outline the use of strategies, such as the use of visual supports and consistent classroom routines



Collaborative Structures

The knowledge of what supports to implement in the classroom does not reside in any one individual. Rather, various teams collaborate to inform and plan strategies and accommodations.

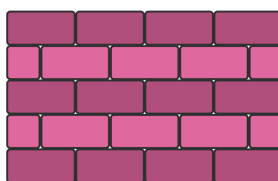
- Co-teaching teams plan together and share instructional responsibilities
- Interdisciplinary Team Meetings are held regularly to discuss and understand each students' needs and to develop a consistent support plan; teachers, therapists, and administrators all participate
- Home-school Connection: The input of families is highly valued and considered in the development of a student's support plan



System-wide Structures

The specific practices above can only be consistently implemented with the support of all structures by those implementing the ASD Nest program.

- The Department of Education provides funding to schools, including a budget for a cap on Nest class sizes
- New York University coordinates training and provides professional development and on-site consultation to staff in all schools
- Hunter College offers training to all new Nest staff entering the program
- Individual school administrators commit to implementing structures and providing the necessary supports



Philosophical Foundation

Particular philosophical tenets underly all practices and inform all structures.

- **True inclusion:** students with ASD are not just placed in a classroom with general education students, but are recognized as full contributing members to the class and school community
- **Collaboration:** central to the success of the Nest program is the belief that the interdisciplinary team is the expert in each school
- **Family involvement:** a child's parents and other relevant family members provide invaluable knowledge about their children, as well as benefiting from supports of the school staff and the program at large
- **Focus on strengths:** staff utilize students' strengths to support them in areas of challenge