LSNYC’s Education Rights Project represents hundreds of NYC schoolchildren every year in special education and discipline proceedings, working to identify and challenge the school-to-prison pipeline in immigrant communities and communities of color. Our team of education advocates works closely with families to access educational supports for their children. We advise and represent public and charter school students who require improved special education services, are facing suspension or exclusion from school, or who seek transfer or medical accommodations. To accomplish these goals we seek improvements in Individual Education Plans (IEPs) and in the quality of school communication with families, and represent students at suspensions, MDR’s and impartial hearings. We also counsel older students who are overage and under-credited, and who require assistance in completing their education and transitioning to adulthood.

In addition to our dynamic daily practice, we are actively involved in the community on behalf of our clients. We work closely with community organizations, legislators and others, and advocate for alternatives to suspension. We recently reached a landmark settlement with the Department of Education in T.H. v. Farina, a citywide lawsuit challenging unnecessary student removals by Emergency Medical Services (EMS) to psychiatric emergency rooms. The lawsuit led to systemic reforms including crisis intervention teams in every City school, training for school staff in therapeutic crisis intervention, and a new protocol for addressing behavioral health emergencies.

Making Dreams a Reality: Support for Immigrant Students: With support from the New York State Assembly Office of the Speaker, LSNYC launched in 2012 Community College CONNECT, a citywide project to support NYC’s low-income immigrant community college students through legal advice, advocacy and community education. LSNYC advocates help students complete their education by providing information and advocacy to overcome obstacles that can derail students’ success including:

- threats of homelessness from unlawful evictions or foreclosure
- physical, emotional, legal and economic hardships created by domestic violence
- financial crises created by predatory student and consumer debt scammers

The LSNYC Education Rights Project conducts community training and special projects with immigrant students in areas such as school discipline, mental health services and special education. Through LSNYC’s holistic, connected services and advocacy, we work closely with immigrant communities to develop individual plans for uninterrupted education and success.

Our Legal Assistance Hotline is open Monday through Friday from 10am to 4pm. Call 917-661-4500 to speak to an intake officer in any language.