

LEAST RESTRICTIVE ENVIRONMENT

Determining Continuum of Placements - Best Practices and Considerations



STAFF



What staff are needed to implement an IEP that meets the student's needs in order for the student to make progress toward his/her annual goal(s) and in the general curriculum?

Examples: General educator in collaboration with special educator, Part time support from special educator, Full time support from special educator, Supplemental aids and services

SUPPLEMENTAL AIDS AND SERVICES



Are supplemental aids and services needed for the student to make progress toward his/her annual goal(s) and in the general curriculum?

Examples: Scheduled time for special education and general education co-planning, Modified curricular goals, Pre-teaching, Alternate ways for student to demonstrate learning, Test modifications, Changing method of presentation, Adaptive equipment, Audio text, Adjustments to sensory inputs (i.e. lights, sound), Social skills instruction, Facilitating friendships, Counseling supports

PROGRAM ADJUSTMENTS



Are program adjustments needed for the student to be involved in and to make progress toward his/her annual goal(s) and in the general curriculum?

Examples: Accommodations (changing **HOW** the student demonstrates learning and/or **HOW** the teacher presents content), Modifications (changing **WHAT** the student is expected to learn), Access via pre-requisite skills (instruction based on below grade level skills that support student progress toward grade level standards)

TRAINING AND SUPPORTS



Is training of personnel or parents needed for the student to be involved in and to make progress toward his/her annual goal(s) and in the general curriculum?

Examples: Training for staff; In-home training for student and/or parents

INSTRUCTIONAL ARRANGEMENT/SETTING



Taking into consideration the special education services needed above, what is the most appropriate instructional arrangement/setting in which to implement the student's IEP?

Examples: General education classroom, Inclusion support, Resource, Self contained, Alternative campus, Non-district placement

ADDITIONAL PLACEMENT CONSIDERATIONS

Placement is not:

- Based on category or severity of disability
- Based on types of supports needed or configuration of delivery system
- Based on availability of educational or related services
- Based on availability of space or administrative convenience
- Based on what the parent wants or what a school professional wants without consideration to the student's needs based on his/her determined specially designed instruction (SDI)
- Guiding the development of the IEP goals and objectives
- Based on needed modifications that cannot be provided in the general education setting

IDEA 2004

34 CFR § 300.114 LRE requirements

- (2) Each public agency must ensure that--
- (i) To the maximum extent appropriate, children with disabilities, [. . .] are educated with children who are nondisabled; and
 - (ii) Special classes, separate schooling, or other removal of children with disabilities from the regular educational environment occurs only if the nature or severity of the disability is such that education in regular classes with the use of supplementary aids and services cannot be achieved satisfactorily.

34 CFR § 300.115 Continuum of alternative placements

- (a) Each public agency must ensure that a continuum of alternative placements is available to meet the needs of children with disabilities for special education and related services.
- (b) The continuum required in paragraph (a) of this section must -
- (1) Include the alternative placements listed in the definition of special education under § 300.38 (instruction in regular classes, special classes, special schools, home instruction, and instruction in hospitals and institutions); and
 - (2) Make provision for supplementary services (such as resource room or itinerant instruction) to be provided in conjunction with regular class placement.

34 CFR § 300.39 Special Education

- (a) General.
- (1) Special education means specially designed instruction, at no cost to the parents, to meet the unique needs of a child with a disability, including--
- (i) Instruction conducted in the classroom, in the home, in hospitals and institutions, and in other settings; and
 - (ii) Instruction in physical education.
- (2) Special education includes each of the following, if the services otherwise meet the requirements of paragraph (a)(1) of this section--
- (i) Speech-language pathology services, or any other related service, if the service is considered special education rather than a related service under State standards;
 - (ii) Travel training; and
 - (iii) Vocational education.

ACRONYMS:

CFR
IDEA 2004
IEP
LRE

Code of Federal Regulations
Individuals with Disabilities Education Improvement Act of 2004
Individualized Education Program
Least Restrictive Environment

