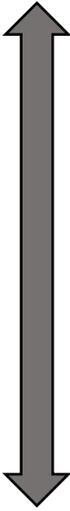


Least Restrictive Environment: The Basics

This document provides an overview of Least Restrictive Environment (LRE) and is intended to provide general guidance and offer considerations for Case Conference Committees when determining the appropriate placement for students with disabilities.

<p>What is LRE?</p>	<p>Least Restrictive Environment (LRE) is based on the premise that the general education environment is the <i>first choice</i> for educating all individuals. As described in IDEA, LRE should always aim to provide the following to individuals with disabilities:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To the maximum extent appropriate, children with disabilities, including children in public or private institutions or other care facilities, are educated with children who are not disabled. • Special classes, separate schooling, or other removal of children with disabilities from the regular educational environment occurs only when the nature or severity of the disability of a child is such that education in regular classes with the use of supplementary aids and services cannot be achieved satisfactorily.
<p>Case Conference Committee Responsibilities</p>	<p>The case conference committee (CCC) determines the services required to address the individual’s needs and the environments where these services will be provided. The CCC is responsible for ensuring:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Supports are available to teachers and other personnel that allow individuals with disabilities to be educated with their nondisabled peers; • All areas of special education, support and related services are considered; • All LRE decisions are documented in the IEP; • LRE is considered at least annually. However, an individual’s needs may change and need to be reconsidered more frequently by the CCC; • The IEP includes an explanation of the extent, if any, to which the individual will not participate with nondisabled individuals in the general education settings and in extracurricular and nonacademic activities; and • The LRE is determined with consideration of any potentially harmful effect on the individual, and the quality of services that he or she needs.
<p>Least Restrictive Environment Questions</p>	<p>The CCC establishing the student’s placement must consider the following questions:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. What specially designed instruction, accommodations, and modifications does the student require to access grade-level content standards? 2. What supports are needed to assist the teacher and other personnel in providing specially designed instruction, accommodations, and/or modifications? 3. How will the provision of special education will services, related services, and supplementary aids and services in the general education environment impact the student’s ability to access grade-level content standards?

	<p>4. If appropriate, describe the need to provide specially designed instruction, accommodations, and/or modifications outside of the general education environment.</p>
LRE Considerations for School Age Students	<p>LRE considerations a CCC must address for school age students include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • the services the student needs; • the supplementary aides and supports needed by the student; • the environment as well as what occurs in that environment; • the general education curriculum; • instruction; • a review of the appropriateness and educational benefit of each service and environment being considered for the individual • academic opportunities and settings that nondisabled individuals experience; and • non-academic and extracurricular activities in which nondisabled individual participate.
Supplementary Aids and Services	<p>Supplementary aids and services are aids, services, and other supports that enable children with disabilities to be educated with nondisabled children to the maximum extent appropriate.</p> <p>These aids, services and supports can be provided in:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • general education environments, • education–related settings (e.g., field trips, work experience sites), • extracurricular settings (e.g., athletics, clubs, school plays, etc.), and • non-academic settings (e.g., school dances, school sponsored activities).
Accommodations	<p>Accommodations are supports or services provided to help a student access the general curriculum and demonstrate learning. An accommodation “levels the playing field” without changing what is being taught or tested. An accommodation is “intended to reduce or eliminate the effects of a student’s disability,” but does not reduce what the student is expected to learn.</p> <p>Examples include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Additional testing time • Large print textbooks • Use of audiobooks • Use of a calculator
Modifications	<p>Modifications are changes made to the performance expectations in general education classes. When curriculum is modified, the context and performance standards for a student with a disability are different than the context and performance standards of their nondisabled peers. It changes the playing field for a student.</p>
Continuum of Placements	<p>LEAs must ensure the availability of a continuum of placement options to meet the special education and related services needs of eligible individuals. The continuum of placements includes the provision of special education services in:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • general education classes, • resource rooms, • separate classrooms, • nonresidential schools or facilities, • residential school or facilities, • hospitals, and • homes.

	<p>Example of a continuum of placement options:</p>  <p><u>Least Restrictive</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • General education with weekly monitoring from a special education provider • General education with daily consultation from a special education provider • General education with special education services and supports included in that setting which are aligned with the general education curriculum • General education with specific education services provided for part of the day in a resource room or a special education classroom • Self-contained special education classroom • Special day school (outside of the school environment) • Residential treatment facility • Hospital/homebound <p><u>Most Restrictive</u></p>
<p>Placements other Than the General Education Environment</p>	<p>After examining the general education classroom placement as the first option, the case conference committee may determine that a child may need to receive one or more services outside of the general education environment.</p> <p>For example, if a child cannot make progress toward the general education curriculum even when supplementary aids and services are provided, the CCC may determine that the student will receive specially designed instruction in a special education setting.</p> <p>Removal from the general education environment should only occur because the specific needs of the student cannot be met. Please note that a student should not be removed from the general education environment solely because the student needs modifications in the general education curriculum.</p>
<p>Considerations for Placements Outside of the General Education Environment</p>	<p>When some or all of a student’s special education is to be provided in a special education setting, the CCC should consider the following questions.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What are the reasons the eligible individual cannot be provided an education program in an integrated school setting? • What supplementary aids and supports are needed to support the eligible individual in the special education program? • Why is it not possible for these aids and supports to be provided in an integrated setting? • What is the continuum of placements and services available for the eligible individual?
<p>Special School Placement</p>	<p>As placement decisions are made, the CCC must first consider a placement in a school where the student’s nondisabled peers are educated. Some students require that their special education needs be met in special schools which typically only provide programs for students with disabilities. Examples of this type of special school in Indiana include Indiana School for the Deaf and Indiana School for the Blind and Visually Impaired.</p>