

Quick Tips

quick tips...

Essential information and/or interesting facts from Special Education Services, Alabama State Department of Education.

for Standards-Based IEPs



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PLACEMENT AND THE LEAST RESTRICTIVE ENVIRONMENT

The Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA) states that a student with a disability must have the services to support his/her needs in order to make progress in the general curriculum and to achieve his or her annual goals. The law also says the student must get this support in the least restrictive environment (LRE). This means that a student with a disability must be educated to the maximum extent possible with children who are nondisabled.

Placement is based on the student's needs...

The LRE must be based on the Individualized Education Program (IEP) as determined by the IEP Team at least annually, be as close as possible to the student's home, and in the school that he/she would attend if nondisabled, unless the IEP requires some other arrangement. A student with a disability cannot be removed from his/her age-appropriate general education classroom solely because of needed modifications in the general education curriculum.

When the IEP Team decides the location and frequency of a student's services, the Team then determines the student's placement. The student's placement will be based on the student's needs and on the importance of educating the student in the least restrictive environment. The IEP Team will begin by assuming that the student will be served in a general education classroom at his or her neighborhood school. The Team will work together to identify services and supports that will help the student be successful in general education classes and participate in other activities at the school. Only if the Team decides that the student will not be able to make progress in general education classes full-time, should the Team consider a more restrictive placement. This could mean the student will spend most of the time in a general education classroom and some time in a resource class. It could mean the student will go to a different school that is as close as possible to his or her neighborhood school. Or it could possibly mean that the student will go to a separate school or be served at home (CAUTION – only for medically fragile students). The amount of time and the service delivery model depends on the individual needs of the student.

Possible placement considerations include the following:

- A general education class for all subjects, with special materials, technology, services, and/or accommodations
- A resource class for some subjects and a general education class for other subjects
- A special class for all subjects
- A separate school (public or private) for the majority of the day
- Instruction at home or in a hospital
- A public or private residential school
- Instruction in an early childhood program (see below)

These different types of placements make up the **continuum of services**. A variety of placement options may be available in most schools throughout the school district. Other types of placement may be available in only a few schools. The school a student is assigned should be based on the district's plan for school zones, and on which schools offer the placement the student needs if his/her zone school cannot meet the student's individual needs.

The following should be considered when determining if a student's education placement is appropriate and not too restrictive:

- The student is making progress.
- The student's teacher has high expectations for the student.
- The student has access to nondisabled peers.
- The student's individual needs are being addressed.
- The classroom or school environment has no harmful effect on the student.
- The student is receiving the quality of services he or she needs.
- The student has access to the same equipment, technology, and areas as do students without disabilities.

The classroom and related services in a student's IEP determine the student's placement in the least restrictive environment. Remember, placement cannot determine the services. The IEP Team must give a clearly defined justification statement on the Individualized Education Program Signature Page of any removal of a student with a disability from the general education classroom or environment.

In almost every case, the local public school district will be able to offer the services and placement in order to meet a student's needs. However, if the IEP Team decides that a student requires a placement that the local school district does not offer; a school district may look for another school district or a private school to provide the services. If the IEP Team decides that a student will go to a school in another district or to a private school, transportation will be made available to the parent at no cost.

CHILD COUNT LEAST RESTRICTIVE EDUCATIONAL ENVIRONMENT CODES

CODE	MEANING
To be used for children 6-21 years of age only	
01	100% to 80% of the Day Inside the Regular Education Environment
03	79% to 40% of the Day Inside the Regular Education Environment
04	Less Than 40% of the Day Inside the Regular Education Environment
05	Private School (Parentally Placed)
06	Separate School - Public Day School Greater Than 50% of the Day
07	Separate School - Private Day School Greater Than 50% of the Day
08	Homebound
09	Hospital
10	Public Residential School Greater Than 50% of the Day
11	Private Residential School Greater Than 50% of the Day
40	Short Term Detention (Community or Residential) or Correctional Facilities
To be used for children 3-5 years of age only	
20	Regular Early Childhood Program At Least 10 Hrs. Per Week - Receiving Majority of Special Education Services in the Regular Early Childhood Environment
21	Regular Early Childhood Program At Least 10 Hrs. Per Week - Receiving Majority of Special Education Services in Other Location
22	Regular Early Childhood Program Less Than 10 Hrs. Per Week - Receiving Majority of Special Education Services in the Regular Early Childhood Environment
23	Regular Early Childhood Program Less Than 10 Hrs. Per Week - Receiving Majority of Special Education Services in Other Location
18	Separate Class: Attending a Special Education Program--Not Attending a Regular Early Childhood Program or Kindergarten
17	Separate School: Attending a Special Education Program--Not Attending a Regular Early Childhood Program or Kindergarten
16	Residential Facility: Attending a Special Education Program--Not Attending a Regular Early Childhood Program or Kindergarten
19	Service Provider Location: Not Attending a Special Education Program or a Regular Early Childhood Program or Kindergarten
14	Home: Not Attending a Special Education Program or a Regular Early Childhood Program or Kindergarten