

## Least Restrictive Environment

According to the Individuals with Disabilities Act (IDEA), all students who receive special education services should be educated in the Least Restrictive Environment (LRE) according to the level of support and needs.

- Every child has unique individual needs, therefore their special education services will vary and differ from that of their peers in order to meet those needs.
- Special education services can be provided in different settings and locations.
- School districts have a continuum of programs available to help meet the special needs of each student on an IEP.
- As appropriate and defined by the IEP, supplementary aids and services should be provided in order to enable the student to learn in the gen-ed classroom. The student should only be taken out if they cannot receive satisfactory education in the gen-ed room.

The IEP determines the services the student will receive.  
The services then determines the kind of program the student will be in.  
Finally, the program determines the school of attendance.

### Types of Programs

Every school district offers differing programs to help accommodate the needs of students on IEPs.

Please check with your school district to see the specific name of their special needs programs.

- SSN/ILC** Significant Support Needs and Instructional Learning Centers help students by teaching academic, adaptive and communication skills to help increase a student's independence.
- M/M** Mild Moderate programs help students with specific learning disabilities, mild to moderate intellectual and developmental disabilities, and other health impairments.
- Autism** These programs offer academic instruction for students who have significant autistic needs.
- AN** Affective Needs programs focus on social emotional learning.

### Points when considering the LRE:

- How significant are the students' needs? How independent are they?
- How well does the student maintain focus and understand the curriculum?
- What accommodations/modifications do they need in order to learn?
- What natural supports are available in the gen-ed classroom?
- How does the students' needs impact the learning environment?
- Are their social skills age appropriate?

**Decisions about LRE should be discussed at each IEP meeting.**

### Resources:

<https://www.wrightslaw.com/info/lre.index.htm>

[https://www.cde.state.co.us/cdesped/ta\\_lre](https://www.cde.state.co.us/cdesped/ta_lre)

<https://www.behaviorist.com/least-restrictive-environment-in-special-education/>

[http://www.peakparent.org/sites/default/files/2\\_mp\\_packet\\_oct\\_2021.pdf](http://www.peakparent.org/sites/default/files/2_mp_packet_oct_2021.pdf)

[https://www.peakparent.org/sites/default/files/7\\_participation\\_support\\_plan.pdf](https://www.peakparent.org/sites/default/files/7_participation_support_plan.pdf)

