

PLACEMENT AND LEAST RESTRICTIVE ENVIRONMENT

Requirement for Least Restrictive Environment

The district must ensure that:

- 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; and
- 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.

Alternative Placements and Supplementary Aids and Services

The district must ensure that a continuum of alternative placements is available to meet the needs of children with disabilities for special education and related services. The continuum must:

- Include as alternative placements, instruction in regular classes, special classes, special schools, home instruction and instruction in hospitals and institutions; and
- Make provision for supplementary aids and services (such as resource room or itinerant instruction) to be provided in conjunction with regular class placement.

Placement of the Child

The district must ensure that the educational placement of a child with a disability:

- Is determined by a group of persons, including the parents, and other persons knowledgeable about the child, the meaning of the evaluation data, and the placement options;
- Is made in conformity with the Least Restrictive Environment (LRE) provisions.
- Is based on the child's current IEP;
- Is determined at least once every 365 days; and
- Is as close as possible to the child's home;

The district must further ensure that:

- Alternative placements are available to the extent necessary to implement the IEP for each child with a disability;
- Unless the child's IEP requires some other arrangement, the child is educated in the school that he or she would attend if not disabled;
- In selecting the least restrictive environment, consideration is given to any potential harmful effect on the child or on the quality of services which he or she needs; and
- A child with a disability is not removed from education in age-appropriate regular classrooms solely because of needed modifications in the general curriculum.

Nonacademic Settings

- In providing or arranging for the provision of nonacademic and extracurricular services and activities, including meals, recess periods, each school district must ensure that each child with a disability participates with nondisabled children in the extracurricular services and activities to the maximum extent appropriate to the needs of that child.
- School districts must ensure that each child with a disability has the supplementary aids and services determined by the child's IEP Team to be appropriate and necessary for the child to participate in nonacademic settings.

Special Education Placement Determination

The **Special Education Placement Determination** form is used to document:

- The placement decision is made by a group of people, including the parents that are knowledgeable about the student and knowledgeable about the evaluation data and placement options.
- The IEP/Placement team's consideration of placement options and placement determination in accordance with the least restrictive environment requirements.
- That the parent has been given a copy of the placement form.

Directions:

1. Identify meeting participants; list all members participating in the placement decision. This can be accomplished by gathering signatures of participants on the **Meeting Notes** form.
2. To document **Placement Determination**, the Placement Team reviews the current IEP and the services identified that are to be provided, and the current evaluation information. Any evaluation information used in determining placement should be attached or listed under "other".
3. After reviewing the IEP and evaluation data, identify and document all placement options considered. For example:
 - Regular class with resource room support
 - Regular class with in class support
 - Separate class (e.g. life skills class, behavior support class)

 - Special or separate school
 - Residential placement (e.g. classroom instruction with residential placement, residential treatment program)
 - Hospital/Institution (classroom instruction in hospital, individual instruction in hospital)
 - Home Instruction

4. For each of the placement options considered, describe:
 - The benefits of this placement (e.g. academic benefits, nonacademic benefits);
 - The possible harmful effects on the child or on the services in this placement option;
 - The modifications/services that were considered to maintain the student in a less restrictive option (before selection of a more restrictive option).
5. Document which placement option is selected/rejected and the reason why.
6. Give the parents a copy of the **Placement Determination** form.
7. After making the placement determination, enter the Federal Placement Code for the placement selected.

NOTE:

All **initial** placements require **Prior Written Notice and Consent**. Any **changes** in placement, made during the subsequent annual placement review, require **Prior Written Notice**. The Team can provide this notice by using a **Prior Notice of Special Education Action**.

The district must also provide prior written notice of refusal if the parent requests placement, the team considers but does not reach consensus, and the district resolves the lack of consensus by refusing the parent's requested placement.

Placement Descriptions

Placement Description (By option on continuum of placement options)	Placement Reporting Codes And Definition
Regular Class or regular class with resource room Examples: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Full time regular education with ERC support • Regular class with resource room support • Full time regular education with consultation • Alternative education with resource room support 	30: outside the regular class less than 21% of the day
Regular Class with resource room Examples: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Regular class with 3 periods of ERC 	31: outside the regular class 21%- 60% of the day
Special or Separate Class Examples: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Life Skills class for all but computer class • Behavior class for all but PE/Music 	33: outside the regular class more than 60% of the day
Special or Separate School Examples: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Therapeutic program only for students with disabilities located in a separate school 	34: Public separate school 35: Public private school
Residential Placement Examples: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Classroom instruction with residential placement • Residential treatment program 	36: Public residential 37: Public residential
Hospital/Institution Examples: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Classroom instruction in hospital • Individual instruction in hospital 	32: Hospital
Home Instruction Example: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Home instruction 5 hours per week 	39: Homebound