

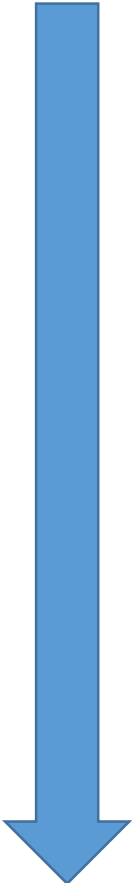
All about LRE

What does LRE stand for? LRE stands for Least Restrictive Environment.

What does LRE mean? Least Restrictive Environment is a federal law. The law says that students with disabilities have the right to be educated with their non-disabled peers as much as possible. This means that students with special needs should not be removed from their classroom unless they can't make progress even with supplementary aids and services. The purpose of LRE is to make sure that students with disabilities are included in the general education classroom with their peers as much as possible.

What does "restrictive" mean? In this case, "restrictive" means that your child's access to his general education curriculum and peers is being limited. It's important for your student to be less restricted, so that he has more access to his general education curriculum and peers. Your child has the right to an education that is as much like his peers' education as possible.

I've heard that LRE is a "continuum of services." What does that mean? LRE is not black and white; it's a range of services. Restricting your student's educational setting should be done in small steps in order to find the environment that will work best for your child, but will still allow him to be educated with his general education peers as much as possible.

| <p style="text-align: center;">Least Restrictive</p>  <p style="text-align: center;">Most Restrictive</p> | Educational Setting |
|---|--|
| | The student is in a general education classroom for the entire day with no additional interventions or supports. |
| | The student is in a general education classroom for the entire day with additional interventions and supports provided by the general education teacher or through the I&RS Team. |
| | The student is in a general education classroom for the entire day with additional interventions and supports provided by a special education teacher. |
| | The student is in a general education classroom for most of the day, but is pulled out for small group instruction by a special education teacher. |
| | The student is in a general education classroom for part of the day, and goes to a self-contained special education classroom for some subjects. |
| | The student is in a general education classroom for part of the day, and goes to a self-contained special education classroom for some subjects. |
| | The student is in a self-contained special education classroom for all academic subjects. The student will still be integrated with his general education peers for some activities such as special area classes, lunch, and recess. |
| | The student is completely removed from his community and is in an out of district (tuition placement) setting for the entire school day. The student does not have any access to his general education peers or curriculum. |
| The student is completely removed from the school setting and is provided with homebound instruction. The student does not have any access to his general education peers or curriculum. This is the most restrictive setting and should only be used in special circumstances for short periods of time. | |

Who decides what level LRE my child should be in? LRE is determined by the student's IEP Team. The IEP Team consists of: the case manager, the teacher(s), the parent, and sometimes the student. All of these people discuss the student's abilities and needs to determine which setting would be most beneficial to the student. A student's class should never be changed to a more restrictive setting until additional interventions and supports have been attempted in his current classroom.

Why should I care whether my child is in his LRE?

Preparation for Adult Living: The goal of education is to prepare individuals to be contributing members of society. Segregated settings often cannot prepare individuals to function in integrated community and work environments because they do not afford those with or without disabilities opportunities to develop the attitudes, values, and skills required to get along with one another as interdependent members of society. By attending their local schools, students with disabilities can practice skills in the actual community settings where they're needed and they can then develop a sense of belonging.

Improved Learning Through Peers and Greater Exposure: Students with disabilities who are placed in general education classes have opportunities to grow socially and academically through peer models and exposure to a greater variety of experiences.

Growth for Peers: Through having students with disabilities in their schools and classes, peers without disabilities learn to develop skills in dealing with others who are different from them. This experience often leads to growth in their self-esteem and interpersonal behaviors, paving the way for the formation of rewarding adult relationships with a variety of people in community, home, and workplace settings.

Effective Use of Resources: When students with disabilities are educated in general education classes, special educators provide support in that setting. This affords students the opportunity to learn from special educators, general education classroom teachers, and classmates. The entire class benefits from the collaboration of general education and special educators; some general education educators feel they have learned from special educators more effective ways to assist all students in the class.

Friendship Development: Inclusion affords students with and without disabilities opportunities to become friends with one another. Some of the friends that students with disabilities make in school today will be their co-workers and fellow community members as they reach adulthood.

Acceptance of Differences: As students with and without disabilities interact as classmates and friends, opportunities arise to break down barriers and help people to understand each other better. Inclusion can help us to create a society that accepts and values persons with and without disabilities as contributing members in all aspects of community life.

Team Building: Successful inclusion of students with disabilities requires greater collaboration between general education and special education personnel. This teamwork can result in improved instruction for students and improved staff morale. The parents of the students with disabilities also become valued members of this collaborative team, sharing their dreams and aspirations for their children's futures.

Focus on Strengths: Inclusive education programs are characterized by a focus on the student's strengths, rather than the student's deficits. This emphasis enables the educators to look closely at areas where the student is functioning most like his typical peers, and these strengths are then used to facilitate positive interactions with classmates.

Support of Civil Rights: The Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA) entitles all children with disabilities to free appropriate public education in the least restrictive environment. In addition, Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 guarantees that people with disabilities cannot be excluded from any program or activity receiving federal financial assistance.