

Priority Area 1:
Least Restrictive
Environment
(LRE)



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Priority Area 1: Least Restrictive Environment (LRE)

Under 34 CFR §300.114 “to the maximum extent appropriate,” students experiencing disabilities, including students “in public or private institutions or other care facilities, are educated with children who are nondisabled; and special classes or separate schooling for children with disabilities or their removal from the general education environment occurs only when the nature or severity of the student’s disability is such that education in general education classes with the use of supplementary aids and services cannot be achieved satisfactorily.”

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 nondisabled...

IDEA also requires that schools provide a full continuum of placements as needed, ranging from general education classrooms with support to special classes and special school placements. The IEP team is responsible for determining the most appropriate educational placement in the least restrictive environment that can meet the student’s needs.

The purpose of this priority area is to ensure placement decisions are individualized in accordance with IDEA regulations and to determine if a relationship exists between placement decisions and outcomes of students experiencing disabilities.

LEAST RESTRICTIVE ENVIRONMENT (LRE)

RECORD REVIEW ITEM: LRE-1 - 34 CFR §300.116(a)

Record Review Item	Potential Documentation
<p>The placement decision was made by a group and included the parents; the group included individuals who have knowledge about:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The student; • Meaning of evaluation data; and • Placement options. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Individualized Education Program • Special Education Placement Determination • Prior Written Notice • Parent invitation • Meeting notes
Evidence of Compliance	
<p><input type="checkbox"/> YES</p> <p>Mark YES if there is evidence which indicates that the placement decision was made by a knowledgeable group.</p>	<p><input type="checkbox"/> NO</p> <p>Mark NO if the evidence indicates the placement decision was not made by a knowledgeable group.</p>

RECORD REVIEW ITEM: LRE-2 - 34 CFR §300.116(b)

Record Review Item	Potential Documentation
<p>The file's documentation demonstrates that the student's placement was:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Determined annually, at a minimum, • Based on the student's needs as indicated in the IEP, • As close as possible to the student's home; and • Resulted in the student being educated in the school that they would attend if nondisabled unless the IEP requires another arrangement. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Meeting Notes • IEP – PLAAFP, Specially Designed Instruction, Related services and/or Special Factors • Resident school and attending school • Other relevant information used to make placement decisions during the IEP process • Special education placement determination
Evidence of Compliance	
<p><input type="checkbox"/> YES</p> <p>Mark YES if the evidence indicates that placement decisions are made in</p>	<p><input type="checkbox"/> NO</p> <p>Mark No if the evidence indicates that either of the following are true:</p>

<p>conformity with <u>all</u> of the LRE provisions below:</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Determined annually, at a minimum,</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Based on the student’s needs as indicated in the IEP,</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> As close as possible to the student’s home; and</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Resulted in the student being educated in the school that they would attend if nondisabled unless the IEP requires another arrangement.</p> <p>Special factors or justifications requiring a more restrictive placement decision may be considered as evidence of compliance as long as there is evidence that the above factors were considered.</p>	<p><input type="checkbox"/> Placement decisions are not made in conformity with LRE provisions.</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Placement decision is not supported by the present levels and/or special education and related services.</p>
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RECORD REVIEW ITEM: LRE-3 - 34 CFR §300.320(a)(6)(i)

Record Review Item	Potential Documentation	
<p>The IEP indicates the student was provided accommodations <u>based on the student’s unique needs</u> as indicated by the IEP that enable the child to be involved and make progress in the general education curriculum.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • IEP – PLAAFP, Supplementary Aids/Services; Accommodations, and/or Specially Designed Instruction • Evaluation results • List of accommodations provided to teacher(s) • Classroom observation notes or report • Report from an interview with student’s teacher • Meeting notes 	
Evidence of Compliance		
<p><input type="checkbox"/> YES</p> <p>Mark YES if there is evidence of <u>all</u> of the criteria below:</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Accommodations that need to be provided to the student are documented;</p>	<p><input type="checkbox"/> NO</p> <p>Mark NO if there is no evidence that the IEP team considered the need for accommodations;</p> <p>OR</p>	<p><input type="checkbox"/> NOT APPLICABLE</p> <p>Mark N/A if the evidence indicates the IEP team considered the need for and determined the student does not require accommodations.</p>

<input type="checkbox"/> The accommodations align with the student’s PLAAFP; and <input type="checkbox"/> Required accommodations were provided.	Accommodations were included in the IEP, but there is no evidence that required accommodations were provided, and/or accommodations do not align with the student’s PLAAFP.	
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RECORD REVIEW ITEM: LRE-4 - 34 CFR §300.324(a)(2)(i-v)

Record Review Item	Potential Documentation
<p>The IEP team considered special factors including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The use of positive behavioral interventions and supports, and other strategies, to address the behavior of a student whose behavior impedes their learning or the learning of others; • The language needs of a child with limited English proficiency, as those needs relate to the child’s IEP; • The use of Braille in the case of a child who is blind or visually impaired unless the IEP team determines, after an evaluation of the child’s reading and writing skills, needs, and appropriate reading and writing media (including an evaluation of the child’s future needs for instruction in Braille or the use of Braille), that instruction in Braille or the use of Braille is not appropriate for the child; • The communication needs of the child, and in the case of a child who is deaf or hard of hearing, consider the child’s language and communication needs, opportunities for direct communications with peers and professional personnel in the child’s language and communication mode, academic level, and full range of needs, including opportunities for direct 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • IEP – Special factors, Supplementary Aids/Services, Accommodations, and/or PLAAFP • Meeting notes • Functional Behavior Assessment/Behavior Intervention Plan • Evaluation report

<p>instruction in the child’s language and communication mode; and</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Whether the child needs assistive technology devices and services. 	
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Evidence of Compliance

<p><input type="checkbox"/> YES</p> <p>Mark YES if there is evidence of <u>all</u> of the criteria below. The evidence indicates the IEP team:</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Considered the existence of special factors,</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Determined that special factors apply to this student, and</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Appropriately addressed the applicable special factors in the student’s IEP.</p>	<p><input type="checkbox"/> NO</p> <p>Mark NO if the evidence indicates the IEP team did not consider any special factors;</p> <p>OR</p> <p>The IEP team considered special factors, determined that special factors applied to this student, and did not appropriately address the applicable special factors in the student’s IEP.</p>	<p><input type="checkbox"/> NOT APPLICABLE</p> <p>Mark N/A if the evidence indicates the IEP team considered the existence of special factors and determined the special factors do not apply for this student.</p>
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RECORD REVIEW ITEM: LRE-5 - 34 CFR §300.116 & 300.320(a)(5)

Record Review Item	Potential Documentation
<p>The IEP team considered:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • All placement options and related services in conjunction with discussing any needed supplementary aids and services, accommodations/modifications, assistive technology and/or accessible materials, and supports for school personnel as well as potential harmful effects on the student. • The potential harmful effects of the placement of the child and whether it would impede the ability of the child or other children to learn. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Special Education Placement Determination • Placement Considerations • Nonparticipation justification • Prior Written Notice • IEP – PLAAFP, Special Factors, Supplementary Aids/Services, Accommodations, and/or Specially Designed Instruction • Evaluation Report • Meeting notes
Evidence of Compliance	

<p><input type="checkbox"/> YES (must meet all criteria under A or B to mark “yes”)</p> <p>Mark YES if the evidence indicates either:</p> <p style="padding-left: 20px;">A. The student is educated or served in the general education setting,</p> <p>OR</p> <p style="padding-left: 20px;">B. For students not educated or served in general education, the IEP includes justification for why the student’s placement is not the general education classroom and there is evidence of <u>all</u> of the following:</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> The placement is based on the needs of the student;</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Reflects that the team has given adequate consideration to meeting the student’s needs in the general education classroom with supplementary aids and services; and</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> If the nature or severity of the disability is such that education in general education classes, even with the use of supplementary aids and services, cannot be achieved satisfactorily, a justification is given for the decision;</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Describes potential harmful effects to the student or others, if applicable.</p>	<p><input type="checkbox"/> NO</p> <p>Mark NO The evidence does not include a rationale, or the rationale given includes <u>any</u> of the following:</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Is not based on the student’s needs;</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Does not reflect consideration or the provision of supplementary aids and services in the general education classroom; or</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Does not describe potential harmful effects to the student or others, if applicable.</p>
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RECORD REVIEW ITEM: LRE-6 - 34 CFR §300.116

Record Review Item	Potential Documentation
<p>The student was not removed from education in age-appropriate general education classrooms solely because of needed modification in the general education curriculum.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • IEP – Service Summary and/or PLAAFP • Student Schedule • Service Trackers • Observation Report
<p>Evidence of Compliance</p>	

<input type="checkbox"/> YES Mark YES if the evidence indicates the student <u>was not</u> removed from general education classrooms just because the curriculum needed to be modified.	<input type="checkbox"/> NO Mark NO if the evidence indicates the student was removed from general education classrooms with age-appropriate peers due to the need for curricular modifications.	<input type="checkbox"/> NOT APPLICABLE Mark N/A if the evidence indicates the student was not removed from classrooms with age-appropriate peers and does not require modifications.
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RECORD REVIEW ITEM: LRE-7 – 34 CFR §300.117

Record Review Item	Potential Documentation
The student participates with nondisabled peers in the extracurricular services and activities to the maximum extent appropriate and has the supplementary aids and services determined by the child’s IEP Team to be appropriate and necessary to participate in nonacademic settings.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • IEP – Service Summary, Nonparticipation justification, and/or PLAAFP • Student Schedule • Observation notes or report • Meeting notes
Evidence of Compliance	
<input type="checkbox"/> YES Mark YES if the evidence indicates the student is included in extracurricular activities and has access to aids and services during extracurriculars as determined by the IEP team.	<input type="checkbox"/> NO Mark NO if there is evidence the student is excluded from extracurriculars or has not received the aids and services during extracurriculars as determined by their IEP team.

Individual Student File Review Form

Student Information				
Student Name:				
Student SSID:				
Student DOB:				
Student Disability:				
Grade:				
IEP Start Date:				
IEP End Date:				
LRE				
LRE1	Placement decision was made by knowledgeable group and in conformity with LRE provisions	Y	N	
LRE 2	Placement was determined: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Annually • Based on the student's IEP • As close as possible to the student's home • Where the student who attend if nondisabled 	Y	N	
LRE 3	Accommodations were included & align with PLAAFP	Y	N	N/A
LRE 4	Special Factors were addressed	Y	N	N/A
LRE 5	All placement options considered	Y		N
LRE 6	Not removed for modifications	Y	N	N/A
LRE 7	Participation in extracurriculars	Y		N
Comments				

LEAST RESTRICTIVE ENVIRONMENT (LRE) – Summary Sheet

INFORMATION	
LEA Name:	Required Sample Size:

Total number of student files reviewed is indicated below.

Elementary School Students	Middle School Students	High School Students	Out of District Placements	Grand Record Total

List SSIDs of the targeted sample of student files. Enter “Yes” if evidence was found. Enter “No” if evidence was not found. Enter “NA” if the item is not applicable to the selected student. No item may be left blank.

SSID	LRE-1	LRE-2	LRE-3	LRE-4	LRE-5	LRE-6	LRE-7

Plan of Correction – Identify what will be done and when to correct any individual or systemic noncompliance for each item where the LEA found noncompliance during the self-assessment process.

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LRE Focus Group Questions:

LRE	School/District Staff	Parents	Students	Community
• What story does our district’s LRE data tell?	X	X	X	X
• What are our district’s/programs’ inclusion success stories?	X	X	X	X
• What patterns exist within our student population (e.g., race, ethnicity, disability, gender, and grade), school sites and IEP team decisions regarding LRE?	X	X	X	X
• How well are student and parent perspectives included in LRE decisions?	X	X	X	X
• How does our district’s staffing and staff practices relate to our LRE data?	X	X	X	X
• What investments have we made, or should we consider making to support our district’s implementation of inclusive practices?	X	X	X	
• What are the systemic changes, personnel growth and professional learning, and supports for students needed to increase inclusion in our system (e.g., UDL)?	X	X	X	X