

## **LEAST RESTRICTIVE ENVIRONMENT (LRE)**

**20 USC 1412 (a) (5) (A)**

**56205 (a), 56031, 56201, 56206, 56303, State Board Policy (10/10/1986)**

### **POLICY**

It shall be the policy of this the Sacramento County SELPA 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. Special classes, separate schooling, or other removal of children with disabilities from the regular educational environment, occurs only when the nature or severity of the disability of the child is such that education in regular classes with the use of supplemental aids and services cannot be achieved satisfactorily

### **PROCEDURES**

#### **HOUSING, DISPERSEMENT AND ASSIGNMENT OF SPECIAL EDUCATION PROGRAMS**

Special education programs, appropriate to students' needs, are housed on regular school campuses and dispersed within LEAs and throughout the SELPA to ensure to the maximum extent possible that individuals with disabilities are served in their neighborhood schools, or in schools as close to their homes as possible. Students with special needs receive services in their neighborhood schools unless their IEPs document reasons that placement in alternative settings is appropriate. Inherent in any decision to relocate programs is sensitivity to the need to minimize frequent and disruptive moves.

LEAs shall ensure that special education programs are located on regular education campuses and that students, to the maximum extent possible, are placed at their neighborhood schools or in schools that are as close to their homes as possible. LEA directors consider and recommend program locations in the context of complementary pairings of special and regular education programs for the purpose of maximizing opportunities for appropriate interaction among students and access to age-appropriate activities for students with disabilities. The SELPA director and the Special Education Council engage in ongoing deliberate planning that guides program location on a SELPA-wide basis in a manner that facilitates maximum integration for students.

#### **PHYSICAL LOCATION OF PROGRAMS**

LEAs shall ensure that the physical location of the special education programs is selected to facilitate continuing social interaction with non-disabled students. Program location decisions

within LEAs and on a SELPA-wide basis are driven by a commitment to produce continuing social interaction among regular and special education students.

The promotion of positive social interaction between students with disabilities and non-disabled students will guide LEA and SELPA-wide decisions and actions in regard to the physical location of special education programs. To maximize social interaction with non-disabled peers, students with disabilities will be placed in facilities that provide access to all school extracurricular activities unless their IEPs document reasons that placements in alternative settings is appropriate.

#### EQUAL ACCESS TO GENERAL EDUCATION ACTIVITIES

Each LEA shall ensure that individuals with disabilities shall have equal access to regular education activities, programs and facilities on the regular school site and participate in those activities as appropriate to their needs.

LEA IEP teams consider the regular class in the school that a student would attend if not disabled as the first placement option for the student. Further, IEP teams consider the unique educational needs of each disabled student in determining the possible range of aids and supports that are needed to facilitate the student's placement *in the regular education environment*. If a more restrictive placement in the continuum of placement options available to student is recommended for a student, IEP teams make the recommendation with the understanding that the placement must be one that maximizes opportunities for the student to interact with non-disabled peers to the extent appropriate to the needs of the students.

#### IEP STATEMENT OF SUPPLEMENTARY AIDS AND SERVICES

The Sacramento County SELPA IEP form contains a statement of supplementary aids and services that the student with a disability needs to ensure his/her participation in the general education curriculum.

#### IEP STATEMENT REGARDING REMOVAL FROM GENERAL EDUCATION ENVIRONMENT

The Sacramento County SELPA IEP form contains a statement verifying that children with disabilities are removed from the regular education environment only when the nature of or severity of the disability is such that education in the general education environment, with the use of supplementary aids or services cannot be achieved satisfactorily.

#### COOPERATION OF ALL SCHOOL PERSONNEL

Each LEA shall encourage the close cooperation of all school personnel to facilitate opportunities for social as well as academic interaction among individuals with disabilities and non-disabled individuals.

Sacramento County SELPA administrative policies embody the provisions of IDEA that promote the close cooperation of all school personnel to facilitate opportunities for social as well as

academic interaction between individuals with disabilities and non-disabled individuals. The policies express a compelling preference for serving students with disabilities in regular classes with appropriate aids and supports as a first preference. Dialogue concerning the implementation of these policies takes place in prescribed and informal forums within the SELPA and LEAs, and within subsets of these organizations. Dialogue takes place among all individuals who provide educational services to students.

#### MAXIMUM ACCESS TO GENERAL EDUCATION PROGRAMS

Each local education agency shall ensure that all students with disabilities are educated and participate with non-disabled in academic, nonacademic and extracurricular activities and that removal of students 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 use of supplementary aids and services cannot be achieved satisfactorily. The IEP shall include an explanation of the extent, if any, to which the child will not participate with non-disabled children in the regular class and in extracurricular and other nonacademic activities.

#### SUPPORT OF SCHOOL PERSONNEL

Each local education agency shall provide school personnel the necessary support to ensure student success. The SELPA's funding allocation plan shall provide for the distribution of resources to ensure that each local education agency can provide school personnel the support necessary to ensure student success.

Based on, but not limited to a survey of LEA needs, on research-based studies, on changes in educational laws and regulations, and on case law, in-service training will be provided to staff to assist them in meeting the social and educational needs of students with disabilities. School personnel will also receive support necessary to ensure success of students through exchanges of information on students during IEP meetings, during case reviews on students, during discussions with students' previous service providers and during discussions and conferences with parents.

#### UTILIZATION OF GENERAL EDUCATION RESOURCES

Each LEA shall ensure that a pupil will be referred for special educational instruction and services only after the resources of the regular education program have been considered and, where appropriate, utilized. Such resources may include, but not be limited to, Student Study Teams, early literacy programs and accommodations and modifications to the case program in addition to intervention programs.

#### DISTRIBUTION OF SPECIALIZED EQUIPMENT AND SERVICES

When a student's IEP team determines that the student requires specialized equipment and/or service, the equipment and and/or service shall be provided to the student at his or her classroom site unless the IEP provides documentation that the equipment and/or service is to be provided by an alternative means, as determined by the student's unique needs.

(See Sacramento county SELPA's Low Incidence Policy & Procedures)