



New York State Education Department  
Office of Special Education  
**Educational Partnership**



# Least Restrictive Environment (LRE)

## High-Quality Inclusive Services & Infrastructure Considerations

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Developed collaboratively by the Technical Assistance Partnerships for Academics, Behavior and Equity



New York State Education Department  
Office of Special Education  
**Educational Partnership**

# Disclaimer

The resources shown are designed to provide helpful information. Resources are provided for instructional use purposes only and do not constitute NYSED endorsement of any vendor, author, or other sources. To the best of our knowledge, the resources provided are true and complete.

# Our Staff



# Staff Information



# Today's Facilitators

# Introductions

- Name
- Role
- District
- School
- Population Served

# Meeting Norms

- Take care of your needs (water, food, restroom, etc.)
- Speak your truth – Use “I” statements
- Ask what you need to understand and contribute
- Listen with respect
- Push your growing edge
- Participate and struggle together
- Expect a lack of closure
- Respect each others’ needs and learning styles



# Blueprint for Improved Results for Students with Disabilities



## Self-Advocacy

Students engage in self-advocacy and are involved in determining their own educational goals and plan.



## Family Partnership

Parents, and other family members, are engaged as meaningful partners in the special education process and the education of their child.



## Specially-Designed Instruction

Teachers design, provide, and assess the effectiveness of specially-designed instruction to provide students with disabilities with access to participate and progress in the general education curriculum.



## Research-Based Instruction

Teachers provide research-based instructional teaching and learning strategies and supports for students with disabilities.



## Multi-tiered Support

Schools provide multi-tiered systems of behavioral and academic support.



## Inclusive Activities

Schools provide high-quality inclusive programs and activities.



## Transition Support

Schools provide appropriate instruction for students with disabilities in career development and opportunities to participate in work-based learning.

# Schools Provide High-Quality Inclusive Programs and Activities

## This is evident when:

- Educators use the full continuum of services to ensure that students with disabilities are educated in the least restrictive environment.
- The needs of the students are the primary consideration in the configuration of special education programs and services to be provided to students with disabilities.
- District/school leaders allocate human and financial resources to support scheduling and planning time to ensure all students receive rigorous and appropriate instruction throughout the continuum of special education programs and services.
- Students with disabilities in inclusive settings are provided the accommodations and explicit and specially-designed instruction needed to progress in the curriculum.

# Slide Marker Icons

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# Training Objectives

- Participants will explore the foundational concepts underlying high-quality inclusive services that provide access to LRE.
- Participants will learn the importance of the relationship of high-quality instruction and the supporting infrastructure necessary including:
  - Leadership Considerations
  - Educator Considerations
  - Parent & Family Considerations

# Activity 1:

## Participant Workbook

How may these statements reflect some perceptions of high-quality inclusive services and infrastructure as related to LRE?



# Definition of Least Restrictive Environment(LRE)



“LRE means that the placement of students with disabilities in special classes, separate schools or other removal from the regular educational environment occurs **only** when the nature or severity of the disability is such that even with the use of ***supplementary aids and services***, education cannot be satisfactorily achieved.”

*Regulations of the Commissioner of Education, Section 200.1(cc).*

# Definition of LRE



“The placement of an individual student with a disability in the LRE shall:

- (1) provide the special education needed by the student;
- (2) provide for education of the student to the maximum extent appropriate to meet the needs of the student with other students who do not have disabilities; and
- (3) be as close as possible to the student's home.”

*Regulations of the Commissioner of Education, Section 200.1(cc).*

# Inclusive Classrooms

## Meaningful Discussions



**“I believe the role of education should be to minimize the impact of disability and maximize the opportunities for children with disabilities to participate in general education in their natural community.”**



**Access +  
Participation +  
Supports =  
Inclusion**

# Activity 2:

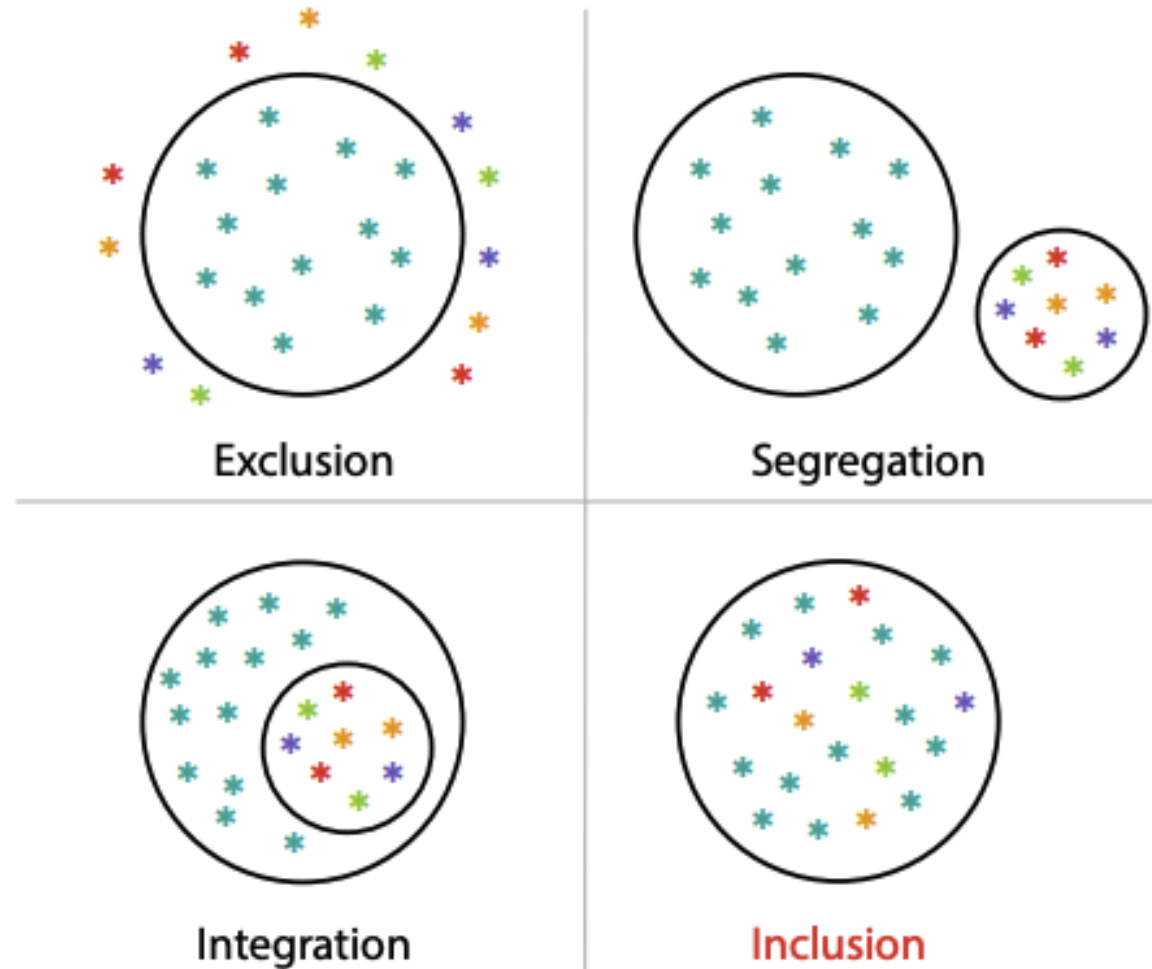
## Participant Workbook



What elements of infrastructure and instruction need to be considered for inclusion to be successful?

## Clarifying Terminology

# What is inclusion?



# What the Research Tells Us

## Why Inclusion?

- Students with disabilities (including students with intellectual disabilities) in inclusive classrooms show academic gains in a number of areas.
- Evidence-based instructional strategies have been shown to be beneficial to all learners
- The time spent in a general education classroom was positively correlated with:
  - fewer absences from school
  - fewer referrals for disruptive behavior
  - better outcomes after high school in the areas of employment and independent living

# High-Quality Inclusive Settings

## Infrastructure Considerations

- Instruction and configuration of classrooms and activities include both students with and without disabilities.
- Special education and general education teachers intentionally plan teaching lessons to promote the participation and progress of students with disabilities in learning and social skills.

*NYSED Special Education Field Advisory on LRE December 2015*

# High-Quality Inclusive Settings

## Instructional Considerations

- Students with disabilities are held to high expectations for achievement.
- Individualized accommodations, supports, and specially designed instruction (SDI) are provided to students with disabilities to participate and progress in regular education classes and activities.
- Evidence-based services and supports are used to foster the cognitive, communication, physical, behavioral and social-emotional development of students with disabilities.

*NYSED Special Education Field Advisory on LRE December 2015*

# High-Quality Inclusion

## Benefits of Inclusive Classrooms



# High-Leverage Practices (HLPs)



## For Inclusive Classrooms

- HLPs are frequently occurring, educational practices that all special educators should know how to do.
- HLPs are evidence based, meaning that they reflect effective methods that when successfully implemented can improve results for struggling learners.
- The twenty-two HLPs cover the areas of collaboration, assessment, social/emotional/behavioral, and instruction.

# Leadership Considerations

Instructional Guidance and  
Infrastructure Considerations





# Key Team Member Roles in Inclusive Schools

## Principal

- Provides support and allocates resources to ensure the successful education of all students
- Ensures the fidelity of implementation of tiered support for students
- Demonstrates values of inclusive education through leadership and administrative activities
- Supports inclusive practices through professional and staff supervision and development

How can school leaders support meaningful inclusion regarding **infrastructure?**

## High-Quality Inclusive Programs

- Communicate a clear expectation that **all** staff share the responsibility for the education of **all** students, including students with disabilities.
- Allocate human, physical and financial resources to support the provision of adequate space, materials, scheduling and planning time.
- Promote a safe and supportive environment where everyone belongs and is accepted.

# Planning Infrastructure

## To Support Inclusion

- In developing the master schedule, plan for students with disabilities to have access to general education classes, special classes, and pull-out services.
- Develop procedures so that any activity outside the school day provides access for students with disabilities.
- Develop procedures for access to transportation for students with disabilities for any off campus extracurricular activities.
- Consider a range of awards at recognition ceremonies to create a more inclusive school climate.

# Individualized Education Program (IEP) Development and LRE

Service Type	Applicable Service Delivery Recommendations	Frequency	Duration	Location	Initiation Date
Consultant Teacher (CT) Services	Direct CT Services	3x/week	60 minutes per session	General education English class	9/6/21
Speech Language Therapy	Individual Bilingual – Spanish	2x/week	30 minutes per session	Therapy room	9/6/21

At the Committee on Special Education (CSE) meeting more attention needs to be paid to the choice in location of services. **The location of the service creates the inclusive setting.**

# Student Scheduling

## Activity 3:

### Participant Workbook



What infrastructure needs to be in place in order to support more inclusive scheduling?

# Scheduling of Classes

## Planning for Inclusion

- After the CSE decision, the next step is scheduling the classes and services as recommended by the CSE.
- At times, the CSE decisions may not match the pattern of the master schedule for the building.
- Planning time for teachers to collaborate supports successful inclusion programs.

How can school leaders support meaningful inclusion regarding **instructional guidance**?

## High-Quality Inclusive Programs

- Share and disseminate evidence-based information on the benefits of inclusive practices for all students
- Communicate the importance of high expectations for all students
- Communicate a clear expectation that **all** staff share the responsibility for the education of **all** students, including students with disabilities.

# Activity 4:

## Participant Packet



### Looking Deeper at HLPs for Inclusive Classrooms

Through your leadership as a supervisor in the school, how could you nurture these inclusive instructional practices?

**HLP 2** - Organize and facilitate effective meetings with professionals and families.

**HLP 6** - Use student assessment data, analyze instructional practices, and make necessary adjustments that improve student outcomes.

**HLP 7** - Establish a consistent, organized, and respectful learning environment.

**HLP 21** - Teach students to maintain and generalize new learning across time and settings.





# Challenges to Implementation

## Leadership Considerations

### Infrastructure

What are the challenges of inclusion implementation related to infrastructure in your Educational Organization (EO)?

### Instruction

What are the challenges of inclusion implementation related to instruction in your EO?

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# Educator Considerations

Instructional Guidance and  
Infrastructure Considerations



# Key Team Member Roles in Inclusive Schools

## General Educator

- Welcomes **ALL** students as members of the general education classrooms.
- Designs and implements accessible curriculum and instruction.
- Collaborates to develop accessible instructional materials for all students.
- Participates in team meetings to plan instruction and supports.
- Works with special educators to evaluate work of students with disabilities.

## Special Educator

- Develops students' IEP goals based on general education standards and functional skills in collaboration with team members.
- Facilitates communication around instructional planning and designing supports for students' full participation in general education instruction.
- Collaborates to develop accessible instructional materials for all students.

# Key Team Member Roles in Inclusive Schools Continued

## **Related Service Providers** (e.g., speech-language pathologist, physical therapist)

- Writes goals and objectives that prioritize skills for students to participate meaningfully in general education instruction and typical social relationships.
- Integrates services within the instructional routines and typical social activities of the general education classroom and settings.

## **Paraeducator**

- Based on plans developed by the teachers and special educator, the paraeducator supports the implementation of instructional programs; facilitates learning activities; collects student data; and carries out other assigned duties (e.g., supervise students at lunch or recess, provide personal care supports to students, do clerical tasks).

How are teachers' part of supporting the **infrastructure** for inclusive classrooms?

## High-Quality Inclusive Programs

- Promote a safe and supportive environment where everyone belongs and is accepted by peers and other members of the school community.
- Be a part of communicating a clear and consistent expectation that **everyone in the classroom** shares the responsibility for the education of **all** students, including students with disabilities.
- Structure the classroom environment to support inclusion
- Seek out collaboration with colleagues

# Activity 5:

## Participant Workbook

What infrastructure needs to be in place in order to support this student in an inclusive classroom?



## Student Case Study

How can teachers support students with disabilities in inclusive classes through well-designed **instruction**?

## High-Quality Inclusive Programs

- Utilize evidence-based instructional practices
- Plan lessons with a Universal Design for Learning (UDL) lens
- Implement the IEP including
  - SDI
  - Accommodations
  - Supplementary Aids and Services
- Engage all students in learning
- Communicate high expectations for learning to all students

# Activity 6:

## Participant Packet



### Looking Deeper at HLPs for Inclusive Classrooms

As an educator in your school, how could you nurture these inclusive instructional practices?

**HLP 1** - Collaborate with professionals to increase student success.

**HLP 4** - Use multiple sources of information to develop a comprehensive understanding of a student's strengths and needs.

**HLP 8** - Provide positive and constructive feedback to guide students' learning and behavior.

**HLP 16** - Use explicit instruction.



# Challenges to Implementation

## Educator Considerations



### Infrastructure

What are the challenges of inclusion implementation related to infrastructure in your practice?

### Instruction

What are the challenges of inclusion implementation related to instruction in your practice?

# Parent and Family Considerations

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Instructional Guidance and  
Infrastructure Considerations



# Key Team Member Roles in Inclusive Schools

## Parent/Family Members and Student

### Parent/Family Members

- Share knowledge and understanding of the student that is valuable to the team.
- Contribute to the assessment process which determines the student's skills.
- Collaborate with other team members to identify priority goals for instruction.

### Student

- Shares with other team members his/her preferences, interests, etc.

How can we encourage parents/families to support meaningful inclusion regarding **infrastructure**?

## High-Quality Inclusive Programs

- Participate in building and district committees
- Advocate for inclusive extra-curricular activities
- Participate in CSE process and decision making
- Share the importance of high expectations for all students, including students with disabilities, with other parents and caretakers

# Working Together

## School and Home Partnership

“Clearly, parents and schools working together to minimize disability and maximize participation provide the greatest hope for a bright future.”

Hehir (2010)



How can we include parents and families in the **instructional** process in order to support inclusive settings?

## High-Quality Inclusive Programs

- Communicate effectively and frequently with parents about instruction
- Respond to parents' instructional concerns by collaborating with the parents to see how concerns may be addressed at home and at school
- Share the benefits of inclusive settings with parents, specifically the higher achievement of students with disabilities.

# Activity 7:

## Participant Packet



### Looking Deeper at HLPs for Inclusive Classrooms

How can parents/families be included in these inclusive instructional practices?

**HLP 3** - Collaborate with families to support student learning and secure needed services.

**HLP 4** - Use multiple sources of information to develop a comprehensive understanding of a student's strengths and needs.

**HLP 9** - Teach social behaviors.

**HLP 22** - Provide positive and constructive feedback to guide students' learning and behavior.

# Challenges to Implementation



## Parent/Family Considerations

### Infrastructure

What are the challenges of inclusion implementation related to infrastructure regarding parents/family members?

### Instruction

What are the challenges of inclusion implementation related to instruction regarding parents/family members?



# Effective Inclusive School Communities

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Everyone Plays a Part  
Summative Activity



## Activity 8: Workbook

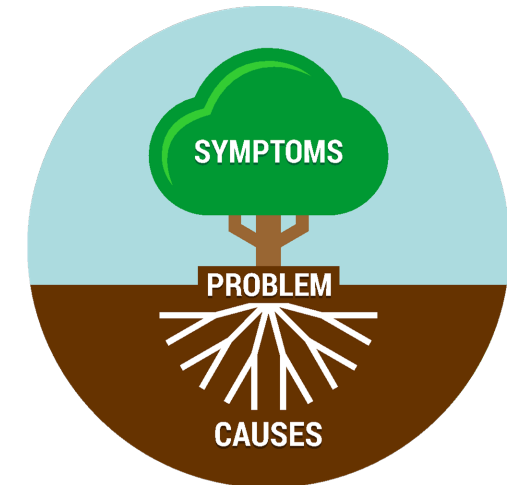


# Wrap-up activity/reflection

## Pause and Summarize

**When considering high-quality inclusive instruction and infrastructure, what practices might be contributing to more restrictive environments for students with disabilities in your district or school?**

*How does this compare with your hypotheses from previous modules?*



# Questions and Answers



# Contact Us



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Bank Street  
College of Education

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# Meeting Evaluation Survey

[Link here](#)