



New York State Education Department
Office of Special Education
Educational Partnership





Least Restrictive Environment (LRE)

Engaging Parents and Families Around LRE





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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.

Training Objectives

- Educational Organizations (EOs) will learn to communicate the meaning of LRE to parents/families.
- EOs will learn to communicate what parents need to know about planning and decision-making processes related to LRE in the areas of:
 - Prereferrals and Referrals;
 - Individualized Education Program (IEP) Development and the Continuum of Services;
 - High-Quality Inclusive Services and Infrastructure
- EOs will ensure that policies, practices, and procedures are instituted to engage in meaningful discussion with parents/families related to all aspects of LRE.

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.

Slide Marker Icons



Activity 1:

Participant Workbook

How may these statements reflect some parent/family perceptions of LRE?



Activity 2:

Participant Workbook



How may these statements reflect some educators' perceptions of family engagement?



Family Engagement and LRE

Perceptions and Perspectives



How might family and educator's differing perceptions of LRE impact LRE decisions?

How might family and educator's differing perspectives create conflict around LRE decisions?

Family Partnership

Communicating the Meaning of LRE to Parents and Families



Activity 3:

Participant Workbook



How might you use this information brief to guide discussions with parents and families around the definition of LRE?



LRE means...

- Students who receive special education services should be in the same classrooms as their peers as much as possible.
- LRE is not a place - it is a principle that guides the placement decision of a student's education program.
- The LRE for each student may look different because their special education needs are unique.

The Importance of Partnership with Families

- Families are children's first and most important teachers and advocates.
- Schools and programs can support families by expanding their knowledge about the benefits of inclusion and include them in policy development.
- Administrators can build staff capacity to form strong goal-oriented relationships with families that are linked to their child's learning, development, and wellness.



Meaningful Access



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

Hehir (2010) p.60

Activity 4: Equity in LRE

Participant Workbook



“Inappropriately placing children into special education programs causes short-term and long-term harm, specifically for students of color, students from low-income backgrounds, and students of color from low-income backgrounds.”

“Once misidentified, students are likely to stay in the special education program for the remainder of their academic career.”

Accessibility of Information



Considerations

“Consent means the parent has been fully informed, in his or her native language or other mode of communication, of all the information relevant to the activity for which consent is sought, and has been notified of the records of the student which will be released and to whom they will be released 200.1(l)(1)”

“The school district must take whatever action is necessary to ensure that the parent understands the proceedings at the meetings of the committee on special education, including arranging for an interpreter for parents with deafness or whose language is other than English 200.5(d)(5)”

Discussion



Stop and Think

“Parent involvement is a process, not a program of activities. It requires ongoing energy and effort.”

“Parent involvement requires a vision, policy, and framework. A consensus of understanding is important.”

Prereferral and Referrals

What Parents Need to Know



Communicating with Parent and Families

Prereferral and Referral



- 1) Process/sequence of prereferral intervention
- 2) What may be included in a prereferral?
- 3) Multi-Tiered System of Supports (MTSS) - slide 1
- 4) MTSS Support Model - slide 2
- 5) Referral Process - Overview of the Sequence and LRE Considerations
- 6) Referral Process - Parent Participation - Reflection Questions

Activity 5: Module 2 Slide Review - Guiding Questions

What is the critical information that parents need to have around prereferral and referrals?

How might you share this information in a parent-friendly manner?

What modalities could you use to communicate with parents?

When a referral is completed on a student, how are you communicating to parents their influence on LRE decision making and the impact it may have on their student's academic career?

How will you ensure that all parents have this information when their child is in the referral process?



IEP Development and the Continuum of Services

What Parents Need to Know



Communicating with Parents and Families

IEP Development and the Continuum of Services



- 1) What, Where, How
- 2) Student Individualization
- 3) Specially Designed Instruction (SDI) in the IEP
- 4) Parent and Student Involvement
- 5) Committee on Special Education (CSE) Decision-Making Process
- 6) Supplementary Aids and Services, Accommodations, Modifications
- 7) LRE and the IEP
- 8) Defined Special Education Programs and Services
- 9) Key Takeaways from Placement Quality Indicators

Activity 6: Module 3 Slide Review - Guiding Questions

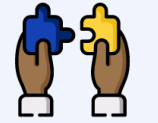
What is the critical information that parents need to have around IEP development and the continuum of services?

How might you share this information in a parent-friendly manner?

What modalities could you use to communicate with parents?

How are you communicating to parents the range of programs and services that could meet the needs of their child in a less restrictive environment?

How will you ensure that parents have this information for every CSE meeting?



Activity

High-Quality Inclusive Services and Infrastructure

What Parents Need to Know



Communicating with Parents and Families

High-Quality Inclusive Services and Infrastructure



- 1) What is Inclusion?
- 2) High-Quality Inclusion - Infrastructure Considerations
- 3) High-Quality Inclusion - Instructional Considerations
- 4) High-Quality Inclusive Programs
 - How can we include parents and families in the instructional process in order to support inclusive settings?

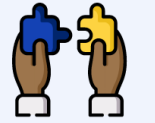
Activity 7: Module 4 Slide Review - Guiding Questions

What is the critical information that parents need to have around high-quality inclusive services and infrastructure?

How might you share this information in a parent-friendly manner?

What modalities could you use to communicate with parents?

How are you communicating to parents the benefits of a more inclusive instructional setting and its impact on post-secondary options for their child?



Activity

Family Partnership - Engagement

Ensuring Family Engagement by
Instituting Policies, Practices,
and Procedures



Activity 8: Stop, Reflect, Assess



“Parents are children’s first teachers, and making good educational decisions should take into account family capacity and desires.”

“Beyond considering family capacity and desires educators should be working with families to ally them in the school’s efforts to minimize the impact of disability.”

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



Activity 9:

Participant Packet

Looking Deeper at High-Leverage Practices for Inclusive Classrooms

As an educator in your school, how could you nurture discussions with families around these inclusive practices?





Communicating About LRE

Reflect on Community Outreach

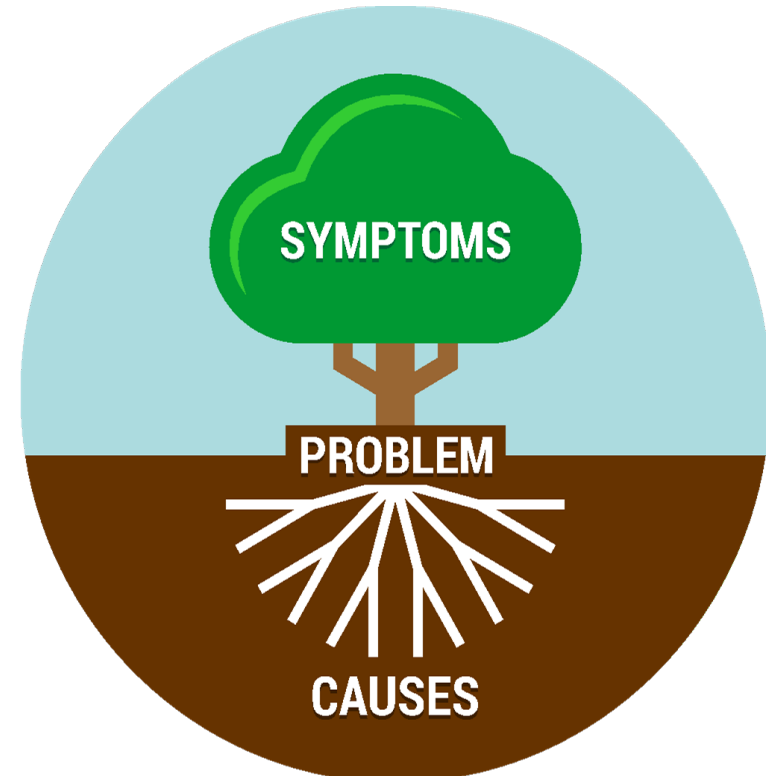
Are students with disabilities portrayed in your EO's public communications as an integral part of your school community?

Activity 10:

Wrap-up Activity/Reflection

Pause and Summarize

How can you shift your district's or school's approach to family engagement in order to ensure LRE for students with disabilities?



Questions and Answers



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Knowledge > Skill > Opportunity



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Meeting Evaluation Survey

[Link here](#)