



WHAT IS THE LEAST RESTRICTIVE ENVIRONMENT (LRE)?



KNOW YOUR SPECIAL EDUCATION RIGHTS: A GUIDE FOR PARENTS AND STUDENTS IN KANSAS

This flyer is part of a series of one-page flyers covering over 30 Special Education topics. They are designed to give you “just in time” information for each step of the Special Education process. You can download the whole series in the form of an extensive booklet, or simply choose the topics and view the individual flyers as you need them. See the whole series here.



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LRE stands for Least Restrictive Environment, and is part of the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA). It refers to the placement that your child is in. It means that your child needs to spend as much classroom time as possible with same-age peers who do not receive special education services. Your child’s placement still needs to meet their needs. This means that the LRE may look different from child to child. Sometimes, placing a child in a regular education classroom isn’t the right fit because a specific service or program can’t be provided there. The IEP team decides on placement together. You and your child are important members of the IEP team. Placement decisions are made after you and the rest of the team decide on IEP services.

How does the IEP team decide my child's placement?

The IEP team must consider your child's needs and the goals written in the yearly IEP, not their type of disability. If your child is not going to learn in the regular education classroom, the school needs to make sure that your child has opportunities to participate and engage with students without disabilities as frequently as possible. This can be through extracurricular or other nonacademic activities as well.

You are a key part of your child's IEP team. This means that you have input on your child's placement. If the placement that your child is in isn't working, you have the right to ask for a change.

Who can make changes to my child's placement?

The school must notify you of any changes they want to make. Once the changes affect 25% or more of your child's school day, or a 25% or more change to services, such as speech therapy, it counts as a change in placement or a material change in services. The parent has to agree in writing to a change in placement. The school has to send you what is known as a "Prior Written Notice (PWN)" if they want to do this.



Sources & Additional Resources:



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[Kansas Special Education Process Handbook, Chapter 6.](#) Kansas State Department of Education.
<https://tinyurl.com/442w2dt3>

Disclaimer: This fact sheet is not intended to provide specific legal advice. If you need legal advice, please contact an attorney. Only an attorney can give you specific legal advice based on your particular situation. We try to update our materials regularly, but the law can change frequently. This publication is based on the law at the time that it was written. Future changes in the law could make information in this fact sheet inaccurate.



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