Indicator 5: Least Restrictive Environment Self-Assessment Instructions

The Office of Special Education Programs (OSEP) has identified 20 indicators to guide SEAs in their implementation of the Individuals with Disabilities Act (IDEA) Part B. These indicators are also used by the SEA to report progress and performance to OSEP. This, in turn, allows OSEP to report concrete data back to Congress and to monitor and supervise State implementation in specific areas.

Indicator 5 challenges the Local Education Agency (LEA) to place students with disabilities in the same academic and social environment as their chronologically same age peers. While we understand that sometimes a self-contained setting is the least restrictive environment for a specific student and their level of need, self-contained is not LRE for all students with disabilities.

Indicator 5 is focused upon the including students with disabilities to the, maximum extent possible, with their same age typical peers in the educational setting. The indicator reads as follows:

Each public agency must ensure that—

(i) 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; and

(ii) Special classes, separate schooling, or other removal of children 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 the use of supplementary aids and services cannot be achieved satisfactorily. [§300.114(a)

Driving Question: Does school/classroom structures support student placement according to the child's Least Restrictive Environment?

<u>Instructions</u>

Prior to beginning the self-assessment, the LEA may need to gather and review educational records, processes, information and documents related to **Least Restrictive Environment (LRE)** in the LEA. This information may include:

1) **Professional development resources or presentations**
2) **Written policies and procedures**
3) **Service page(s) of IEPs**
4) **Teacher/administrator data collection**

Each component and best practice description is followed by a list of measures and examples of those measures. An LEA's stage of practice should be informed by these measures.

Stages of Practice

The self-assessment is intended to identify an LEA's stage of practice in the area of least restrictive environment and provide guidance for LEAs in improving their practice. The OSDE-SES envisions stages of practice along this continuum:

1) None
2) Exploring
3) Partial
4) Adequate
5) Best

An LEA may assess its practice as "Best Practice" if the LEA has measurable/observable evidence of the practice and documentation of consistent use.

Components

For the area of **LRE**, the Oklahoma State Department of Education, Special Education Services division (OSDE-SES) has identified 3 components. These components provide a comprehensive description of **LRE**.

1) **Student participation in the general education environment**
2) **Continuum of placement decisions**
3) **Staff development**

Self-Assessment Team

A team consists of more than one person. The self-assessment should be completed by a team of at least 3-5 individuals. The Self-Assessment Team may include:

1) Director of Special Education Services
2) Special Education Teachers
3) General Education Teachers
4) Administrators
5) Counselors
6) Related Services Personnel
7) Parents

List the team here:

Name	Role	Signature

Components

1) **Student participation in the general education environment**

Best Practice: All students with disabilities participate in the general education environment with their typically developing peers.

Measures:

⎯ Students with disabilities are educated in the general education environment to the maximum extent appropriate.

_____ Consistently _____ Inconsistently

- o Ex. Breakfast, lunch, bus routines
- o Ex. Students are in the general education classroom for academic instruction

⎯ Students with disabilities in a self- contained setting participate in school wide functions

_____ Consistently _____ Inconsistently

- o Ex. Assemblies, field trips, lunch, recess

⎯ Students with disabilities participate in general education curricula
- o Ex. Students with disabilities in self-contained classrooms participate in general education curricula such as music, art, PE

Comments/Documentation:

2) Continuum of placement decisions

Best Practice: IEP Teams consider all possible placements and services to support students with disabilities on an annual basis using data from students' present level of performance. *Placements and services are continuously monitored and reviewed.*

Measures:

── IEP teams consider all placements and services to support students with disabilities on an individual basis
    o Ex: The Continuum of Placement model approved by the OSDE-SES is used to determine placements.
    o Ex. The students' needs are the focus of the team when determining appropriate placement and supports

── Placement decisions are reviewed annually and are continuously monitored and reviewed using data.

        ____Annually ____Continuously

── Using data, placement decisions are reviewed at least annually and are continually monitored and reviewed

        ____Consistently _____Inconsistently

Comments/Documentation:

3) Staff Development

Best Practice: An ongoing staff development program exists that includes research based training emphasizing strategies to work with student with disabilities and provide access to the general education environment.

Measures:

—— School staff receives training in working with students with disabilities

_____ some staff _____ all staff

- o Ex: Once or twice a year the staff receives general training about students with disabilities

—— On-going staff development is evident and uses research based techniques for working with students with disabilities
- o Ex: Staff participates in weekly or monthly PD designed to address various areas of working with students with disabilities.

Comments/Documentation: