

SPECIAL EDUCATION
LEAST RESTRICTIVE PROGRAM

The District will provide an education program for children with special needs from birth to twenty-one (21) years of age an appropriate education program in the least restrictive environment. The following guidelines will assist in determining the appropriate program:

- (1) The District in cooperation with the Prairie Lakes Education Agency will evaluate, staff, and develop an individual education plan (IEP) for each child in need of special education programming.
- (2) The continuum of program placement, outlined in the Iowa Rules of Special Education (Rule 12.5), and the District Developed Delivery System will be used to identify the program placement of a child in a least restrictive environment. When an appropriate placement is not available in one of the District's programs, the staffing team shall document why the child must be placed in a program outside the District.
- (3) Regardless of the severity of a child's special need(s), no child can be automatically excluded from consideration for placement in the least restrictive environment.
- (4) The determination of the least restrictive environment will be re-evaluated at each annual review.
- (5) Each child's IEP will address the least restrictive environment and document the rationale for the placement selected. The staffing team shall document why a child is to be placed in a more restrictive environment such as a special school, rather than a less restrictive environment by answering: (a) What are the reasons the student cannot be provided his/her educational program in an integrated school setting? (b) What supplementary aids and services are needed to support the student? (c) Why can't the identified aids and service be provided in an integrated setting? (d) What is the continuum of alternative placements available for the child?
- (6) The District shall secure input on its Integration Plan from the parents, support staff, administrators, and teachers
- (7) Staff development shall be provided for those needing help in understanding a least restrictive environment.
- (8) Success of placement in a least restrictive environment will be evaluated through: the individual education plan (IEP), compliance monitoring conducted by the AEA or Department of Education, and parent(s).
- (9) The following forms of integration will be addressed for each special education program in each building:
 - (a) physical integration: planning for the location of programs in age-appropriate school buildings with

regular education programs;

(b) functional integration: planning for how students with special needs and regular education children can simultaneously use school facilities and resources; (c) social integration: planning for ongoing personal interactions between special education students and regular education students; (d) societal integration: planning curriculum experiences so, special education students can ultimately work, live, and recreate with non-special education citizens as appropriate.

Reviewed 02/27/08, 04/14/14, 10/14/19