



Explanation of Educational Setting

This tip sheet introduces and briefly defines educational settings that promote access to and progress in general education programming and provides tips for implementation. To learn more, review the additional resources and check with state law for supplemental requirements.

What Does IDEA Say?

According to [IDEA Sec. 300.320 \(a\)\(5\)](#), each child's individualized education program (IEP) must contain the following:

"(5) An explanation of the extent, if any, to which the child will not participate with nondisabled children in the regular class and in the activities described in paragraph (a)(4) of this section."

Paragraph (a)(4) includes a "statement of the special education and related services and supplementary aids and services...and a statement of the program modifications or supports for school personnel."

Did you know?

[Section 300.115 \(a\)](#) of the IDEA requires public agencies to "ensure that a continuum of alternative placements is available to meet the needs of children with disabilities for special education and related services" and [Section 300.114 \(a\)\(2\)\(i-ii\)](#) requires that:

"(2) 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."

Educational setting decisions should be...

- made by a **team** that includes the parents,
- determined **at least** annually, and
- based on a child's **individual** needs, which may change over time.



Educational setting decisions shouldn't be...

- made by **one individual**,
- determined **once** in a child's educational career or only when determining eligibility,
- based on **disability category**,
- predetermined based on easily available programming, or
- **one size fits all.**





Tips for Success

- ✓ Provide access to **nondisabled peers** and the **regular education curriculum** to the maximum extent appropriate.
- ✓ Consider participation in both academic and other extracurricular and nonacademic activities.
- ✓ Start with the student's **present-level statements, goals, and special education services and aids** when determining educational setting.
- ✓ Recognize that the services and aids needed may **vary based on setting and the student need**.
- ✓ **Revisit placement options** when student progress data and needs indicate a change in placement may be required.

Where can you learn more?



PROGRESS Center Website. The PROGRESS website includes additional information about developing high-quality IEPs and additional tip sheets in this series.



Placement, Short-and-Sweet (Center for Parent Information and Resources). This resource provides an overview of placement, including IDEA's requirements, who makes placement decisions, how these decisions are made, and the different placement options available for students.