

Section G

Placement

Introduction

Each child with a disability has the right to educational services designed to meet his/her individual needs. Students receiving special and/or related services will be educated with general education students to the maximum extent appropriate to the needs of both. They will be integrated as much as possible in school activities and have access to an array of services, such as transportation, fine and practical arts, physical education, counseling, and clubs. Educational and related services will be provided without cost to the special needs student except for those fees that are charged to general education students. Service(s) will be provided as close to the student's home as possible. When transportation to a more distant school or center is necessary, transportation will be provided at no cost to the parent.

Least Restrictive Environment (LRE) is that placement which can adequately meet the individual student's needs and which does so with a minimum loss of contact with general education programs and age-appropriate peers. Assignment to any service(s) other than the general classroom shall occur only when the nature and severity of the handicap are such that education in general classes, with the use of supplementary aids and services, cannot be achieved satisfactorily. Services may be provided by any special education teacher in a variety of settings, including general education classes, special education classes, learning centers, etc. Assignments are based on individual student needs and do not allow for waiting lists for services.

Service Options

The continuum of service options within the San Luis Obispo County SELPA is defined as below. They are listed in alphabetical order.

Extended School Year (ESY)

The need for ESY services, the time between the end of one school year and the beginning of the next, is an IEP team decision. ESY is not the standard LEA summer school classes.

Individuals who may **require** ESY services are students who have significant disabilities which are likely to continue for a prolonged period of time or indefinitely. These students' educational service is provided usually in a Special Day Class. ESY is **required** when the interruption of the student's specialized program will cause a loss of skills, when coupled with the limited recoupment capacity, makes it unlikely or impossible that the student will attain the level of self-sufficiency and independence that would otherwise be expected in view of his/her disability.

General Classroom

General classroom instruction, with modifications as necessary, is provided by the general education teacher. Suggestions from the Student Study Team (SST) and consultation with special education staff may be provided.

Home Services

Students less than five years of age may receive home services when home is the most natural environment and where a school setting may be detrimental to the educational progress.

Home/Hospital Instruction

Special education students are eligible for Home/Hospital Instruction when they cannot benefit from the instruction in general or special classes due to a medical condition, such as those related to surgery, accidents, chronic illness, or cannot be educated in a school setting. The IEP team shall include a medical report or the report of the school psychologist stating the diagnosed condition and certifying that the severity of the condition prevents the student from attending the school program. LEAs and Regional Program Providers as defined by the SELPA Local Plan offer Home/Hospital instruction.

Inclusive Education

Inclusive education is part of the program continuum for students in special education. This term is often used when a child with severe disabilities is assigned to a general education classroom for the majority or all of their school day. The student receives appropriate educational and support services as determined by the IEP team in the general education setting. Inclusive education provides a merger of general and special education resources which allows student of diverse needs to be educated together and perform in the general education classroom.

Infant Program

The SLOCOE unless otherwise determined by the SELPA Local Plan operates a program for low incidence children, birth through three years of age. Services include assessment, consultation with parents, parent-child sessions in the home or in a center environment, and interagency linkage with Tri-Counties Regional Center (TCRC). TCRC is the referral agency for all children birth through three years of age.

Non Public Agency (NPA)

A NPA is a private, non-sectarian group or individual that provides related services required for an individual with special needs to benefit educationally from the student's educational program pursuant to an IEP. It may be recommended for a student through the IEP process, when the student needs an intensive level of service that is not available through the public education system.

A NPA is certified by the California State Department of Education and meets the standards prescribed by the county superintendent and county school board. NPAs do not include organizations or agencies that operate a public agency or offer public service, including but not limited to, a state or local agency, an affiliate of a state or local agency (including a private, nonprofit corporation established or operated by a state or local agency), a public university or college, or a public hospital.

Non Public School (NPS)

A Non Public School is a private nonsectarian school that enrolls individuals with special needs pursuant to an IEP, employs at least one full-time teacher who holds an appropriate credential

Section G Placement

authorizing special education services, and is certified by the California State Department of Education. It does not include organizations or agencies that operate as a public agency or offers public services, including, but not limited to a state or local agency, an affiliate of a state or local agency (including a private, nonprofit corporation established or operated by a state or local agency), or a public university or college. A nonpublic, nonsectarian school also shall meet standards as prescribed by the state superintendent and board. A NPS may be recommended for a student through the IEP process, when the student's needs cannot be met in a public school setting. The NPS is frequently used for students with emotional disturbance needing intensive mental health therapy and residential placement.

Preschool Classes

Students with disabilities of preschool age may be served in Head Start programs, state preschools, community preschools, LEA or regionally operated preschool programs. Initial identification and assessment are provided by the student's LEA of residence.

Related Services

Related services are provided by specialists and are specific services not normally designed by a general education teacher, or by other special education staff. These services are supportive of the student's total educational program and may include, but are not limited to: speech and language, hearing and audiological instruction and service, mobility instruction, special instruction for the visually impaired and orthopedically impaired, deaf/hard of hearing, autism services, psychological/counseling services (home or hospital instruction), occupational therapy, and adaptive physical education.

Resource Specialist Program (RSP)

The Resource Specialist provides direct or indirect instruction and other support for students who are found eligible for special education services. The Resource Specialist coordinates and provides instructional planning, special instruction, consultant services, resource information and materials regarding individuals with special needs to classroom teachers and parents or legal guardians.

Special Day Class (SDC)

The SDC provides services to special education students with intensive instructional services in a special education classroom. This may include students identified with a disability for whom such a classroom is the LRE.

State Special Schools

State schools for the deaf, deaf-blind, and blind can provide:

1. Assessment
2. Recommendations for students with these disabilities
3. Long-term educational placement when the local program cannot adequately meet a student's special needs of deaf, deaf-blind or blind, or when the IEP team determines most appropriate placement

Section G Placement

The **Diagnostic Centers** in Fremont, Los Angeles, and Fresno offer special services through the State Schools Division of the California Department of Education. San Luis Obispo County SELPA members are served by the Fresno Diagnostic Center. These services include on-site evaluations as well as two- to five-day evaluations at a Diagnostic Center. These evaluations are completed by a team of educational diagnosticians, speech and language specialists, psychologists, and a pediatrician. These assessment services are provided to LEAs, the child, and his parents without charge.

Appropriate referrals to the Diagnostic Center are for:

1. Students for whom no diagnosis has been possible after **all** assessment efforts have been attempted at the local level.
2. Students for whom assessment and evaluation are not available in the community.
3. Students for whom service(s), curriculum or behavioral questions are not answered after all LEA, county and SELPA resources have been utilized.

All referrals to any of the state schools must be recommended by the IEP team and approved by the LEA administrator of special education. The LEA of residence shares in the expense of education for students placed in a state special education school. Referral forms for the Diagnostic Center are available through the LEA's school psychologist.

Supported Education

Supported education is the **process** of providing assistance and information to ensure the successful inclusion of students with disabilities within the general education classroom. This support can be provided by general education staff, special education staff, the student, the family, and/or peers. This term is often used to include any student with disabilities (learning disabled as well as severely disabled).

Change of Placement Referrals within San Luis Obispo County SELPA

Referring LEA

For a student in need of a program not operated/funded by the referring LEA, the current school service provider completes a *Request for Review/Change of Placement* form. The completed packet is sent to the appropriate administrator as indicated on the reverse of the *Request for Review/Change of Placement* form. The packet must include:

1. Current psycho-educational report
2. Current related services reports
3. Current IEP
4. Other documents/reports, as appropriate:
 - a. Attendance information, including suspensions
 - b. Health information, including medications
 - c. Current academic report(s)
 - d. Current behavior plan, if appropriate
 - e. Psychiatric evaluations, treatment reports

Section G Placement

- f. Agency reports: CCS, MH, TCRC

Receiving LEA

The administrator, upon receipt of the packet, assigns a case manager to review the referral and materials. The case manager may arrange for an observation of the referred student prior to any scheduled IEP meeting, but should not request a delay of the meeting to complete an observation. The LEA may also call upon the services of the SELPA program specialist to observe the student and attend any staffings/reviews. If there is a disagreement between the LEAs regarding the appropriateness of the proposed transfer, the decision is appealed to the SELPA director.

Referral Process

The **referring** LEA is responsible for ensuring the parent receives prior written notice of the IEP meeting.

The **referring** LEA conducts the IEP meeting with all required team members including the parent and representatives from the receiving LEA. The IEP team completes the basic goals and objectives (if required), and after IEP team discussion of program alternatives, assigns the student to the agreed upon program.

The **referring** LEA is responsible for arranging student transportation to the new program (refer to LEA transportation policies). The referring LEA is also responsible for the transfer of educational records to the receiving LEA.

The **receiving** LEA case manager selects necessary staff members to attend the IEP meeting which is organized and facilitated by the **referring** LEA. The primary purpose of the receiving LEA staff at the IEP meeting is to provide information about the program being considered while gathering additional information regarding student needs for IEP implementation. The **receiving** LEA is responsible for arranging the start of the new program and for providing copies of the IEP to all involved staff for implementation with the intent to ensure there are no delays to the implementation of services and placement.

Interim Placement

Students Entering from WITHIN San Luis Obispo County SELPA

If the student has an IEP from a LEA within the San Luis Obispo County SELPA, the *Interim Service Form* is not necessary and a new IEP need not be developed until the annual review, unless the parent or teacher requests an IEP meeting.

Students Entering from OUTSIDE San Luis Obispo County SELPA

The *Interim Service Form* is completed by an administrator or designee whenever a student transfers into a LEA with an active IEP from another SELPA. Each site has a designated person responsible for completing these forms. All necessary information is determined by reviewing records and/or contacting the previous LEA.

Section G Placement

The *Interim Service Form* provides for continuance of the student's IEP from another SELPA for 30 calendar days. This 30-day calendar applies to continuous days and, therefore, the timeline is extended whenever school is not in session in excess of five school days. An IEP must be convened within 30 calendar days to review records, confirm the appropriateness of the program, and complete any new/updated documentation required. Unless there are objective and compelling reasons to deny placement, the receiving LEA will accept the student for the 30-day interim placement. The existing IEP will be implemented and the IEP team will be convened within 30 days by the receiving LEA.

When an administrator/designee determines that their LEA does not have a comparable program to the one stated on the IEP, s/he will contact the administrator of the closest LEA that has an appropriate program. If the suggested program is one run by a Regional Program Provider, the process is detailed below.

Regional Program Providers

If a student's current IEP indicates a level of services provided by a Regional Program Provider the school/LEA completes the *Interim Service Form*. The need for a regional program is confirmed by the school/LEA by reviewing the current IEP and verifying the program from the previous LEA. The LEA special education administrator contacts the appropriate Regional Program Provider administrator. The partially completed *Interim Service Form*, current IEP, and all additional information are sent to the Regional Program Provider's special education administrator.

The Regional Program Provider's special education administrator contacts the parent, completes the Interim Service Form, and places the student. Within 30 calendar days an IEP is called by the regional program's administrator or designee. The LEA of residence will be invited to this meeting and will be kept informed of the appropriateness of the placement.

Regionally Provided Related Services

If a student is placed in a regionally operated special education program and the current IEP calls for contracted related services, copies of the completed *Interim Service Form*, the current IEP and any reports available are sent to the appropriate regional provider's special education administrator. Related services begin and the related services staff is included in the IEP meeting.

Out of County Placements

Students returning or being placed from outside of San Luis Obispo County by an agency, other than education, shall notify in advance the SELPA director and the proposed LEA of residence.

Approved on SEOC on August 24, 2006

Revised August 2006, September 2008, March 2010