

DETERMINING LEAST RESTRICTIVE ENVIRONMENT (LRE) FOR PRESCHOOL STUDENTS

Preschool students in the Kalamazoo RESA service area have access to high quality preschool opportunities. If a student is found eligible for special education services, the Individualized Education Program (IEP) team will determine the necessary services to address the identified areas. In Michigan, children between the ages of 2 years 6 months and 5 years old are served under Part B of Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA). IDEA requires IEP teams to determine the Least Restrictive Environment (LRE) in which the student may receive services. A student may only be removed from the general education setting if the nature and severity of the disability is such that education in the regular class with the use of supplementary aids and services cannot be achieved satisfactorily (§300.114(2)(ii)).

Q & A

Q: What does “regular class” mean in a preschool setting?

A: A classroom with typically developing peers.

Q: What preschool options are available for any child in Kalamazoo County?

A: There are a variety of public and private preschool programs, as well as community-based opportunities that are available for your child.

Q: How do I find out what preschool opportunities exist?

A: Please ask the team you are working with regarding preschool and community-based options. They can provide you with options for you to consider and how to access options you are interested in exploring. This information along with the county pre-kindergarten application are available at www.dreambigstartsmall.org.

Q: How are services determined for a child?

A: Services are determined through an IEP. The IEP meeting includes a group of individuals, including the parent, other persons knowledgeable about the child, person(s) who can interpret evaluation data and is knowledgeable about program and service options. The IEP team decision must be made in conformity of the LRE provision (§300.114(2)(ii)).

Q: What are Early Childhood Special Education (ECSE) Services?

A: ECSE is a preschool option for students with significant special education needs. This is a restrictive environment. Due to the nature of the disability, education in a regular setting with the use of supplemental aids and services are not enough to meet the needs of the child.