



The Benefits of the Least Restrictive Environment (LRE)

Family Café 2023

The Florida Inclusion Network is funded by the Florida Department of Education, K-12 Division of Public Schools, Bureau of Exceptional Education and Student Services, through federal assistance under the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act, Part B.



FIN's Mission

The Florida Inclusion Network (FIN) collaborates with all districts and schools to provide customized services and supports ensuring all students with disabilities have the same educational, social, and future opportunities as their peers.

[Section 1003.57, Florida Statutes \(F.S.\)](#)

FIN's Implementation

In partnership with districts, FIN facilitates the implementation of best practices for inclusive education through:

- Data-driven, student-focused planning and problem solving across districts and schools.
- Data-driven professional development and technical assistance to increase knowledge and skills of district and school personnel.
- Coaching and resources for district and school personnel to build and sustain capacity.
- Sharing information to build collaborative relationships between families, schools and districts.

Know, Understand, Do

After this session, you will:

- Know – what the laws say about the least restrictive environment (LRE)
- Understand – how the LRE benefits students and how in-class supports look
- Do – identify next steps for your child

What Do the Laws Say About the Least Restrictive Environment?



Federal Laws

All students are general education students first. All students must be taught to high standards. Schools must address needs of those at risk of not meeting high state standards. Universal Design for Learning, including technology, supports learning needs of all children.

<https://www.ed.gov/essa>

General education classroom must be the first placement considered by the IEP team. Removal should only be considered if needs can't be met with use of aids and services. The IEP team plans for the extent that a student is included.

<http://idea.ed.gov/>

Least Restrictive Environment (LRE)

Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA) states that “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 not disabled**, and special classes, separate schooling **or other removal of children with disabilities from the regular educational environment occurs only when the nature or severity of the disability of a child is such that education in regular classes with the use of supplementary aids and services cannot be achieved satisfactorily**”.

<https://sites.ed.gov/idea/statute-chapter-33/subchapter-ii/1412>

Endrew F. v. Douglas County School District

On March 22, 2017, the U.S. Supreme Court (sometimes referred to as Court) issued a unanimous opinion in Endrew F. v. Douglas County School District Re-1, 137 S. Ct. 988. The Supreme Court determined that, “To meet its substantive obligation under the IDEA, a school must offer an IEP [individualized education program] reasonably calculated to enable a child to make progress appropriate in light of the child’s circumstances.”

www.supremecourt.gov/opinions/16pdf/15-827_0pm1.pdf

Endrew F. v. Douglas County School District, continued

The Supreme Court decisively rejected the “merely more than de minimis” standard used by the Tenth and other Circuits; therefore, that standard is no longer considered good law. The Court explained, “[a] student offered an educational program providing merely more than de minimis progress from year to year can hardly be said to have been offered an education at all...The IDEA demands more.”

www.supremecourt.gov/opinions/16pdf/15-827_0pm1.pdf

Andrew F. v. Douglas County School District

What does this mean?

"The IEP must be developed in a way that ensures that children with disabilities have the chance to meet challenging objectives, as reflected in the child's IEP goals."

- - Q&A document, IDEA

<https://sites.ed.gov/idea/questions-and-answers-qa-on-u-s-supreme-court-case-decision-andrew-f-v-douglas-county-school-district-re-1/>



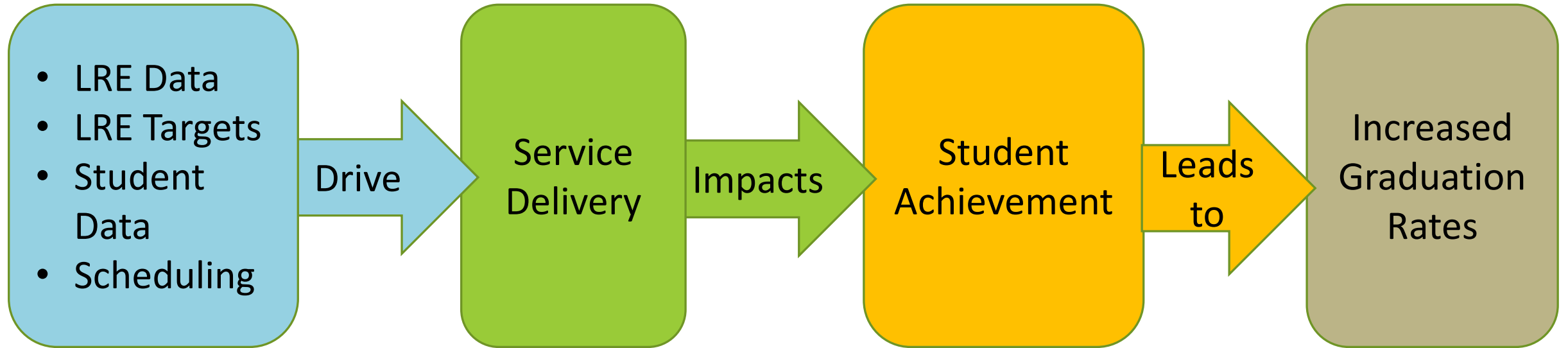
What Does the Research Say About LRE?

Where is the Research?

Students receiving services in a general education classroom (inclusion) is backed by over 40 years of research. When implemented with fidelity, it yields results for all learners:

- Students develop better attitudes and improved social skills (Murawski, 2009)
- Teachers share effective, research-based teaching strategies (Murawski, 2009)
- Schools report having positive student results on assessments (Murawski, 2009)
- Inclusive education results in better academic outcomes. (Cole, Murphy, Frisby, Grossi, & Bolte, 2020)
- Included students experienced significantly greater growth in the development of literacy skills than did their otherwise similar peers. (Dessementet, Bless, & Morin, 2012)

Why is LRE important?



Florida Defines Inclusion as...

“...a student with a disability is receiving education **in a general education** regular class setting, reflecting **natural proportions** and **age-appropriate heterogeneous** groups in core academic and elective or special areas within the school community; a student with a disability is a **valued member of the classroom and school community**; the teachers and administrators support **universal education** and have knowledge and support available to enable them to effectively teach all children; and access is provided to technical assistance in best practices, instructional methods, and **supports tailored to the student’s needs** based on current research.”

[Section 1003.57, Florida Statutes \(F.S.\)](#)

LRE and Inclusion

Thinking About LRE

- LRE is reported as a percentage of time.
- LRE begins with the general education classroom.

Thinking About inclusion

- Inclusion is a culture of belonging.
- Inclusion begins with a mindset and basic principles.

Inclusion isn't earned – it's a right.

In-class services and supports are provided in the LRE to the extent appropriate based on the needs of the child.

LRE is an individualized decision by the IEP team.

LRE Reporting

State Performance Plan (SPP) Indicator 5a: Percent of children with IEPs, age 5 and enrolled in kindergarten and ages 6–21, served (a) Inside regular class 80% or more of day.



Resource Room: Children spending between 40% and 80% of their school day with peers without disabilities.



LRE Reporting

State Performance Plan (SPP) Indicator 5b: Percent of children with IEPs, age 5 and enrolled in kindergarten and ages 6–21, served (b) Inside regular class less than 40% of day.



State Performance Plan (SPP) Indicator 5c: Percent of children with IEPs, age 5 and enrolled in kindergarten and ages 6–21, served (c) In separate schools, residential facilities, or homebound/hospital placements.



LRE Indicator 5 Calculation

The Florida Department of Education measurement for LRE Indicator 5:

- 5A. Percent = $\left[\frac{\text{(\# of children with IEPs aged 5 who are enrolled in kindergarten and aged 6 through 21 served inside the regular class 80\% or more of the day)}}{\text{(total \# of students aged 5 who are enrolled in kindergarten and aged 6 through 21 with IEPs)}} \right] \times 100$.
- 5B. Percent = $\left[\frac{\text{(\# of children with IEPs aged 5 who are enrolled in kindergarten and aged 6 through 21 served inside the regular class less than 40\% of the day)}}{\text{(total \# of students aged 5 who are enrolled in kindergarten and aged 6 through 21 with IEPs)}} \right] \times 100$.

LRE Indicator 5 Calculation

The Florida Department of Education measurement for LRE Indicator 5:

- 5C. Percent = $\left[\frac{\text{(\# of children with IEPs aged 5 who are enrolled in kindergarten and aged 6 through 21 served in separate schools, residential facilities, or homebound/hospital placements)}}{\text{(total \# of students aged 5 who are enrolled in kindergarten and aged 6 through 21 with IEPs)}} \right] \times 100$.

Source: <https://www.ideadata.org/sea-data-processes-toolkit>

LRE Calculation (Student)

Sample Calculation of Total Minutes in a School Week

(includes passing time between classes)

Subject	Time (minutes per week)
English/Language Arts	600
Math	300
Science	180
Social Studies	180
Spanish or Foreign Language	120
Intervention/Enrichment	150
Physical Education	150
Art	60
Lunch	150
Music	60
Total minutes in school week	1,950 (bell to bell)

Source: Florida Inclusion Network (FIN), 2017

LRE Calculation Example (Student)

Sample Calculation for ESE Services for One Student: Billy Smith

ESE Only	Time (minutes per week)
Speech Language Therapy	110

To continue the LRE calculation for Billy, his ESE only hours are subtracted from the total school minutes per week:

1,950 minutes (total minutes per school week)

- 110 minutes (ESE-only minutes per school week for Billy)

1,840 minutes Billy spends with his nondisabled peers

LRE Calculation Example (Student)

Next, the school must determine the percentage of time Billy spends in the least restrictive environment (LRE) in the general education setting:

Billy spends 1,840 minutes with peers without disabilities in a school week
divided by 1,950 minutes in a school week = 94%

Billy is in a regular class placement since he is spending 80% or more time in a school week with his peers without disabilities.

LRE Data

State and District LRE data (and other information about students with disabilities) are available annually in the State and Local Education Agency (LEA) Profile, found at: <http://www.fl DOE.org/ academics/exceptional-student-edu/ data/>

School LRE data are available by contacting your school district or your child's school.



How are ESE services provided in a general education classroom (LRE)?

- varied and determined by individual student data
- related to each student's Individual Education Plan (IEP).

Providing Services and Supports

It is the primary responsibility of the ESE teacher to identify techniques needed to meet IEP goals and services and incorporate them into a lesson.

It is both the general educator and the ESE teacher's responsibility to implement the services in the classroom.

Florida Department of Education's Course Code Directory

Students can receive instruction and support in the general education classroom, as identified in their IEP, with services provided by certified personnel using “in-class” service delivery models as specified in the Florida Department of Education “Course Code Directory (CCD) and Instructional Personnel Assignments.”

<https://www.fldoe.org/policy/articulation/ccd/2022-2023-course-directory.shtml>

Education Paraprofessionals

- An education paraprofessional assists members of the instructional staff in carrying out their duties and responsibilities.
- An education paraprofessional is not required to hold a teaching certificate.
- An education paraprofessional is under the supervision of a certified teacher.

Note: Districts may assign additional requirements for paraprofessionals.



http://www.leg.state.fl.us/statutes/index.cfm?App_mode=Display_Statute&Search_String=&URL=1000-1099/1012/Sections/1012.37.html

Models for In-Class Service Delivery: Co-Teaching

- **Two** teachers are providing instruction through co-teaching in accordance with s. 1003.03, F.S.
- Both teachers share responsibility for planning, delivering, and evaluating instruction for all students in a class/subject for the entire class period.



Models for In-Class Service Delivery: Support Facilitation

- **One** teacher (Grades K to 12 general education) is providing instruction for both the Grades K to 12 and ESE courses, **and**
- **One** ESE teacher provides services via “in class one-on-one.”
- In class one-on-one is defined in the Automated Student Information System as follows: “Teacher meets with an individual student or small group of students on an individualized basis within a traditional classroom but not as a co-teacher.”
- In class one-on-one is also known as, “support facilitation,” or “inclusion teaching” in accordance with s. 1003.03(5), F.S.



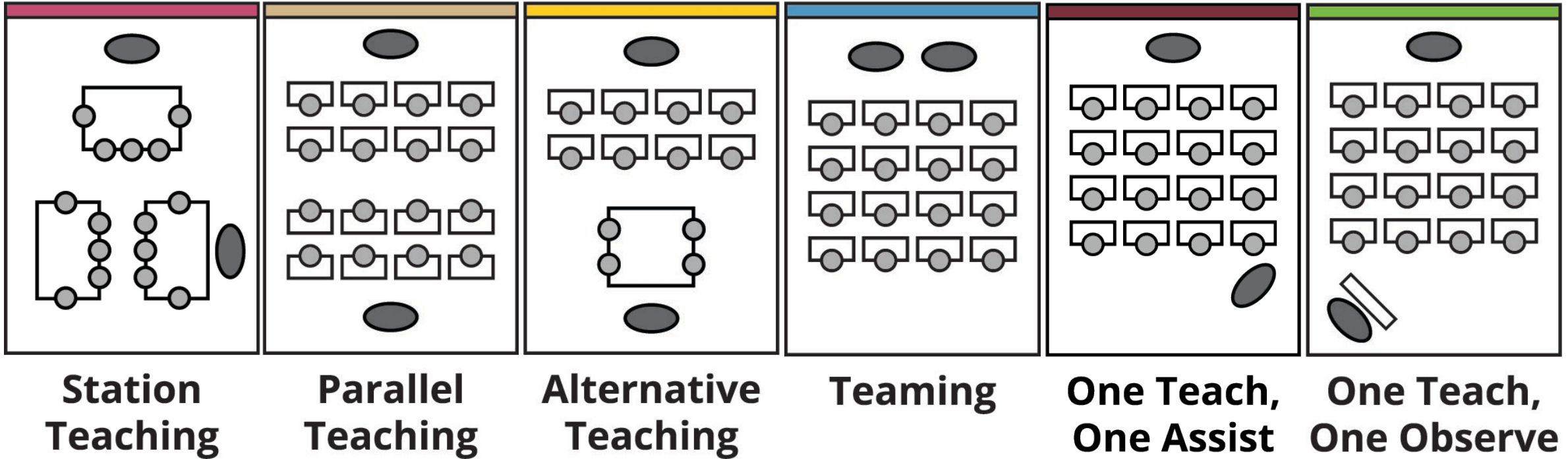
Photo: Shutterstock

What Does Instruction Look Like in an Inclusive Classroom?



Photo: Shutterstock

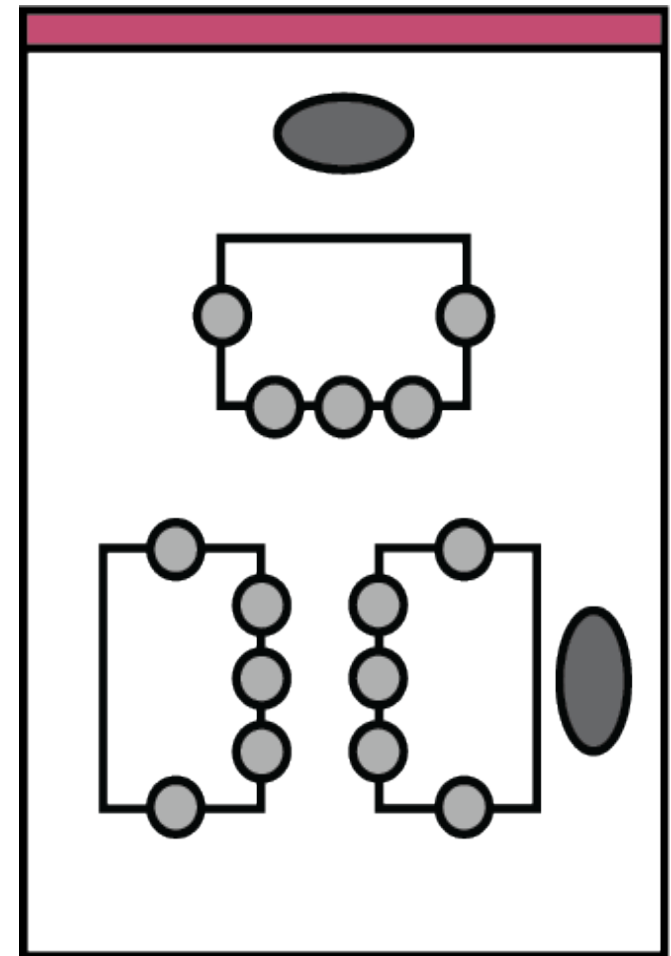
The Six Collaborative Approaches



Station Teaching

- Teachers divide content and students in the Station Teaching model.
- Each teacher instructs one group and subsequently repeats the instruction for the other groups.
- If appropriate, a third station gives students an opportunity to work independently or with a student leader.
- Use - Frequently

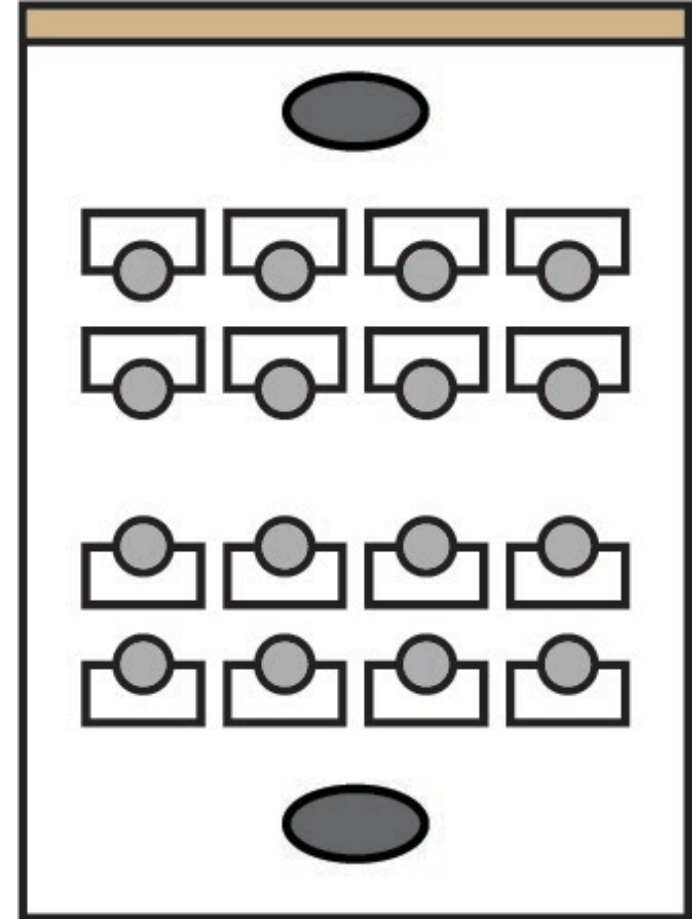
M. Friend (2019) Co-Teach!



Parallel Teaching

- BOTH teachers are teaching the same information.
- They divide the class group and do so simultaneously.
- Use - Frequently

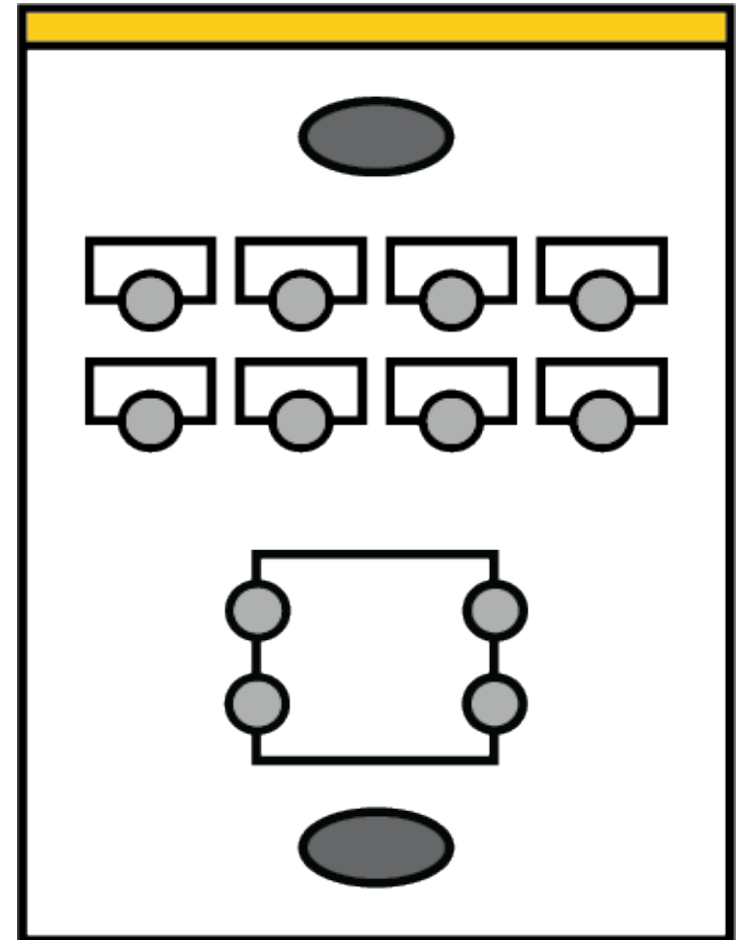
M. Friend (2019) Co-Teach!



Alternative Teaching

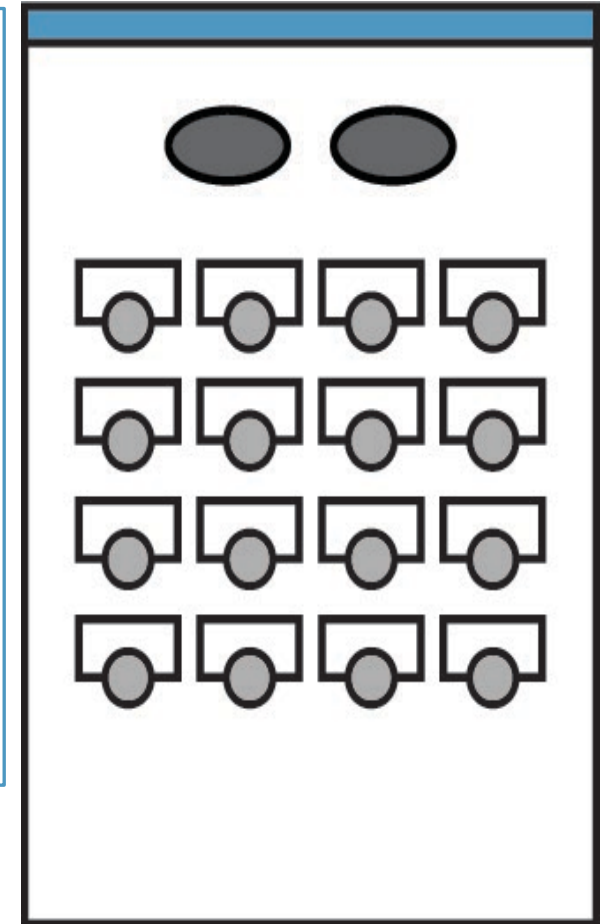
- One teacher takes responsibility for the large group
- The other works with a smaller group (for example, re-teaching, pre-teaching, providing enrichment, assessing).
- Use - Occasionally

M. Friend (2019) Co-Teach!



Team Teaching

- Both teachers are delivering the same instruction at the same time.
- How the delivery of instruction presented may be different.
- Promotes role and content sharing.
- Teaches question asking and provides clarification.
- Use - Occasionally

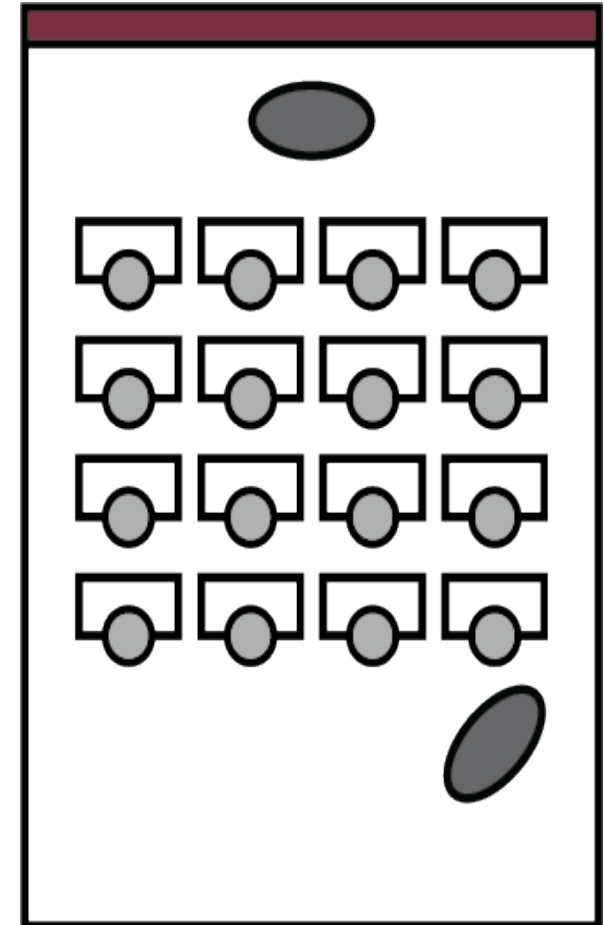


M. Friend (2019) Co-Teach!

One Teach, One Assist

- One person retains primary responsibility for teaching.
- The other professional circulates through the room providing unobtrusive assistance to students as needed.
- Use - Seldom

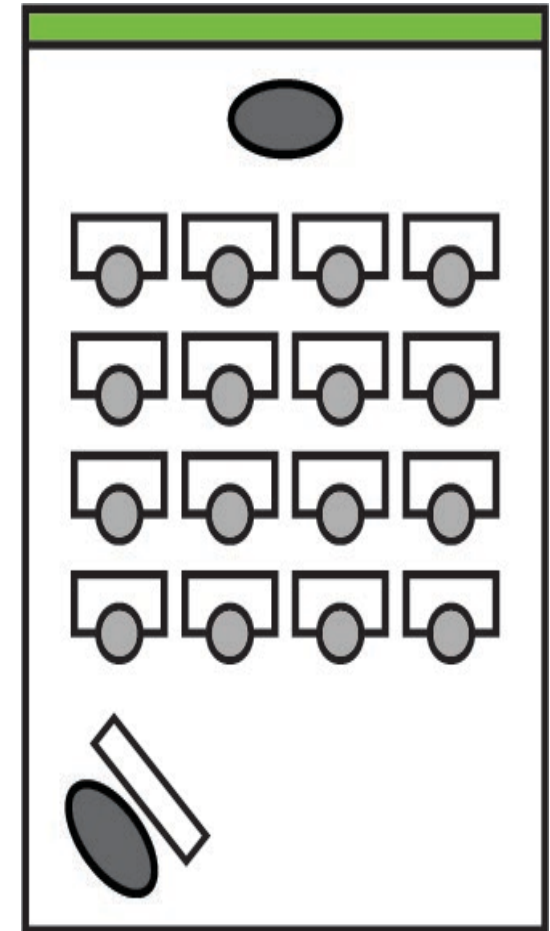
M. Friend (2019) Co-Teach!



One Teach, One Observe

- Focus is on what types of specific observational information to gather during instruction (student behavior, teacher behavior).
- Agree on a system for gathering the data.
- Afterward, the teachers analyze the information and use it to plan instruction.
- Use - Rarely and briefly

M. Friend (2019) Co-Teach!



A photograph of two people in an office environment. On the left is a woman with curly hair, wearing a patterned jacket over a light-colored top, holding a stack of papers. On the right is a man with short dark hair, wearing a red and black striped polo shirt, holding a tablet. Both are smiling. A dark horizontal band across the middle of the image contains the word "COLLABORATE" in white capital letters. The background shows office furniture and a whiteboard.

COLLABORATE

Additional In-Class Service Delivery Models

Dual-Certified Model

One teacher serves as both the Grades K to 12 general education teacher and the special education teacher to provide the specially-designed instruction as identified on the students' IEPs.



Photo: Shutterstock

Consultation Model

Grades K to 12 general education teacher and special education teacher meet face-to-face or via conference call or virtual technologies on a regular basis to: plan, implement, and monitor instructional alternatives designed to ensure that the student with a disability is successful in the general education classroom.



<https://www.fldoe.org/policy/articulation/ccd/2022-2023-course-directory.shtml>

Resource Room Model

The **special education teacher** provides services that are not able to be provided in general education, in another classroom in the regular school with only students with disabilities for a **portion** of the day.



Photo: Shutterstock

Source: FDOE, 2022

Separate Classroom Model

The **special education teacher** provides services that are not able to be provided in a typical school in another location in the regular school with only students with disabilities for **the majority** of the day.



Source: FDOE, 2022

Other Separate Environments

The **special education teacher and other specialized staff** provide services that are not able to be provided in general education, in another school with only students with disabilities for the entire day.



Photo: Shutterstock

Source: FDOE, 2022

Summarizing Key Points



LRE is the general education classroom, with in-class services and supports.



In-class models of support use collaborative approaches.



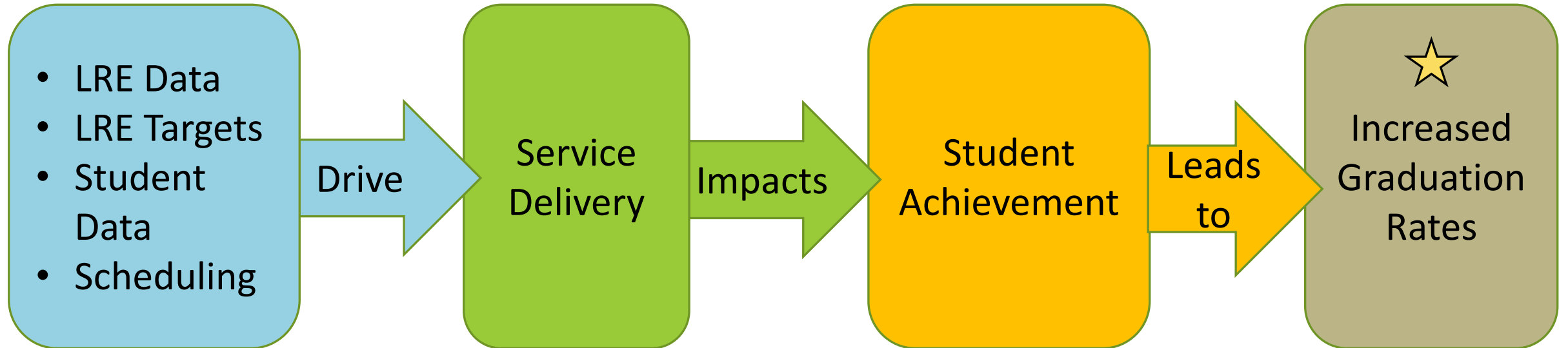
Location of services is an IEP team decision, based on the individual needs of the student.



Services and supports can be provided in a variety of settings.

The Final Outcome

Post-school outcomes for students with disabilities are more positive when students are included to a large extent in the general education setting.





Reflection



What are some points
that stood out for
you?



How can you use one
or more of the tips?



Jot a few thoughts you
want to remember in
your notes.

Additional Supports



Multi-Tiered Systems of Support -
<http://floridarti.usf.edu/>



Florida Diagnostic and Learning Resources System - Parent Services
- <https://www.fdlrs.org/>



Center for Autism and Related Disorders -
<http://florida-card.org/>



Project 10-
<http://project10.info/>



Access Project-
<https://accesstofls.org/>



Family Café -
<https://familycafe.net/>

Additional Supports, continued



Resource Materials and
Technology Center for the
Deaf/Hard of Hearing -
<https://www.rmtcdhh.org/>



Positive Behavior
Interventions and Supports -
<http://flpbis.cbcs.usf.edu/>



Florida Instructional Materials Center
for the Visually Impaired

Florida Instructional Materials
Center for the Visually
Impaired -
<https://www.fimcvi.org/>



Parent to Parent of Miami -
<https://www.ptopmiami.org/>



Technical Assistance and
Training Systems -
<https://tats.ucf.edu/>



Family Network on
Disabilities -
<https://fndusa.org/>

A close-up, low-angle shot of three children's faces, tilted upwards and smiling. The child in the center wears blue-rimmed glasses. The background is a soft, out-of-focus light blue.

How do we support Inclusive Practices?

[Read more >](#)

<https://www.floridainclusionnetwork.com/>

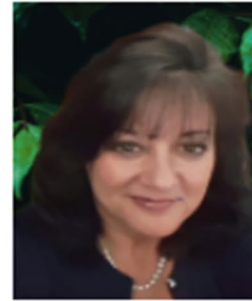
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