



# Inclusion and Students with Developmental Disabilities

By Shanida Mathieu

The 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 that 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 is such that education in regular classes with the use of

supplementary aids and services cannot be achieved satisfactorily."

This is considered the least restrictive environment (LRE).

For students with an Individualized Education Plan (IEP), this means, that to the maximum extent appropriate, the school must first include a student with a disability in a regular education setting.

This is called inclusion. In an inclusion classroom, students with disabilities and other special needs are taught alongside

non-disabled students instead of being segregated in a special education classroom. To help meet students' needs, a special education teacher may work alongside a general education teacher in an inclusion classroom.

Not knowing how your child's unique needs can be met in an inclusive classroom can set off a whirlwind of emotions and questions for parents. However, the use of supplementary aids and services can play a pivotal role in supporting the education of children with disabilities in the general education classroom and their participation in a range of other school activities.

IDEA's definition of this term (at §300.42) reads: *Supplementary aids and services means aids, services, and other supports that are provided in regular education classes, other education-related settings, and in extracurricular and nonacademic settings, to enable children with disabilities to be educated with nondisabled children to the maximum extent appropriate ...*

Basically, supplementary aids and services can be accommodations and

modifications to the curriculum, or the manner in which that content is presented, or how a child's progress is measured. But that's not all; supplementary aids and services can also include direct services and supports to the child and support and training for staff who work with that child. That's why determining what supplementary aids and services are appropriate for a particular child must be done on an individual basis.

If you need more information regarding supplementary aids and services and how they can help support your child in their educational setting, please feel free to contact me at 504-888-9111 or 800-766-7736.



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