



# Free Appropriate Public Education (FAPE) in the Least Restrictive Environment (LRE) Capacity Building & Improvement Effort

Michigan Department of Education Office of Special Education  
Fall 2024

## Parent Focus Group Discussion

### Agenda

1. Introduction to the Michigan Department of Education Office of Special Education (MDE OSE) team members.
2. Introduction to intermediate school district (ISD) team members.
3. Introduction of the ISD Parent Advisory Committee (PAC) members.
  - a. The PAC member's name and first name of their child.
  - b. Tell us what you would like us to know about your child.
4. The MDE OSE will set the context for the Focus Group as a part of the overall LRE monitoring activities.
5. The MDE OSE or ISD team will review the written and posted LRE citations.
6. The MDE OSE or ISD team will review the Family Matters one-pager on LRE citations.
7. Ask for clarifying questions about the process.
8. Begin the discussion. See sample questions below.

### Setting the Context

The MDE OSE will provide written citations 300.114-300.117 printed on charts and posted in the room for the ongoing discussion. The individual citations will be reviewed with the focus group participants prior to the discussion.

## **Discussion Topic**

Given the *Individuals with Disabilities Education Act* (IDEA) requirements related to the annual provision of Free Appropriate Public Education (FAPE) in the LRE for each student with an Individualized Education Program (IEP) (300.114-300.117), what has been your experience in the educational process for your child related to these requirements?

## **Additional Sample Questions**

Do you believe that your child's IEP was based solely on your child's unique educational needs?

At each IEP, did the team discuss the student needs returning to a general education setting or a less restrictive setting?

At each IEP, did the team discuss non-academic opportunities (robotics, etc.)?

At each IEP, did the team discuss support to allow your child to participate in the general education setting?

At each IEP, did the team discuss support to allow your child to participate in non-academic opportunities (robotics, etc.)?

For students who are transported to programs outside their community, does the IEP Team annually consider programs closer to home with accommodation to eliminate or reduce the transportation barrier?

For students transported to programs outside their community, does the IEP Team annually consider the harmful effects of the increased time on the bus (i.e. bathroom, snacks, behavioral needs, increased length of the school day)? Does the IEP Team annually consider programs closer to home with accommodations where your child would be more successful in negating the harmful effects?