

An Analysis of LRE Placement Data Collection for Region 1: Verification, Consistency, and Comparability

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Final Report

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ABSTRACT

Historically, states in the northeast region have differed considerably from neighboring states in the percentage of their special education student population served in different educational environments. Placement data indicate the degree to which students with disabilities are placed in the least restrictive environment (LRE) along the continuum of placement options. This study investigated the degree of consistency with which placement classifications are used by different raters or coders within and across states within the region and explored possible explanations for state-to-state variation in placement patterns. State-specific surveys were created and each contained a core set of questions and exact scenarios. State respondents (special education local district personnel) independently assigned an LRE placement classification to the fictitious students in scenarios based on state-provided LRE placement descriptions. Additional questions were asked about availability, utilization, and perceived value of state-delivered training and technical assistance relative to LRE knowledge transfer. Wide variation existed in the scenario response patterns of respondents both within states and across states. Local, regional, and national recommendations are provided for improving the reliability of LRE data.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

States are required to report placement data for students with disabilities served under the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA) to the U.S. Office of Special Education Programs (OSEP) on an annual basis. Placement data indicate the degree to which students with disabilities are placed in the least restrictive environment (LRE) along the continuum of placement options. LRE data indicate the environment in which special education services are provided and are often used to determine the likelihood of intervention by the State Education Agency (SEA) to the local level. Placement data may also be used to determine levels of intervention by OSEP at the state level. In the northeast, a large amount of variation exists across states with respect to IDEA Part B LRE data. The purpose of this study was to determine if circumstances other than differences in service delivery models might affect LRE data within states in the northeast region. The study focused on placement data for school age students.

Three specific policy questions were addressed regarding LRE data and a fourth policy question was added during the study. The additional question addressed the availability, utilization, and perceived value of various LRE technical assistance (TA) and training opportunities that SEAs make available to local education agencies (LEAs). The policy questions investigated were:

1. To what degree are state directions for reporting/counting children in specific placement categories consistent with OSEP directions?
2. To what degree are state directions to LEAs for reporting/counting children in specific placement categories consistent across states?
3. How do LEAs' understanding of those directions and the actual reporting of data compare or are comparable across LEAs within and across states?
4. What types of technical assistance and training are available to LEAs on classifying LRE placement information and what is their level of utilization and perceived value?

SEA Directors of Special Education in the northeast authorized the Northeast Regional Resource Center (NERRC) to initiate this study on their behalf. NERRC, in turn, contracted with an independent consultant to do the work. The consultant was invited to meet with SEA Directors before involving state IDEA Data Managers. Data Managers provided state information relative to LRE placement, provided input on difficult to code school age special education scenarios, and outlined the types of technical assistance and training provided by their state. The consultant worked closely with six of the eight northeastern states to create a state-specific online survey. Two states chose not to participate in the survey.

The consultant created and housed the online surveys. Section one of the survey focused on the availability, utilization, and perceived value of different types of technical assistance and trainings an SEA might make available. Section two consisted of LRE scenarios for school age Part B students. Respondents were asked to categorize each placement based on state provided LRE placement descriptions. The URL for each online survey was provided to each participating SEA. Without OMB clearance, federal

funding of this study restricted the number of LEA surveys administered to nine per state, and the nine LEAs were not randomly selected. The six participating states generated 45 useable surveys from a total possible of 54 (nine surveys across six states), a response rate of 83 percent. Therefore, this sample is not representative of any state or the northeast region. Selected findings are included below. Survey respondents were predominately local Special Education Directors, with an average tenure in their position of over 10 years. They generally scored themselves as “highly confident” in the LRE data their district reported to the state.

Respondents in most states were inconsistent with respect to their knowledge of what LRE technical assistance and trainings were available from their SEA. Across all of the states, respondents within a state disagreed on the very existence (or nonexistence) of the 11 technical assistance and training methodologies in exactly half of the cases. (See Table 3.) Respondents placed more value on technical assistance methodologies that were one-on-one or interactive in nature, rather than group trainings and static documents. The one exception was a Data Dictionary that five respondents indicated they had access to and used. The mean score calculated from these five respondents on use of the Data Dictionary was higher than all other methods of imparting knowledge about reporting LRE placement data.

Large variation existed in the way respondents classified the same special education scenarios. Regionally there was inconsistency in the way respondents classified the same scenario. Moreover, except for the respondents from the state of New York, there was inconsistency in the way respondents *within* a state classified the same scenario.

In the review of state LRE definitions, two states were found to have modified the language of the OSEP LRE definitions. New Jersey adopted the OSEP-proposed 2006 definitions one year early. This was believed to have had no impact on LRE placement determinations or understanding of placement definitions. Massachusetts, however, included the terms “Full Inclusion, Partial Inclusion, and Substantially Separate Classroom” within the three OSEP placement definitions based on time in the regular/general education classroom. It was hypothesized that these descriptors *might* increase opportunities for miscoding students for this state. A limited review of Massachusetts’s LRE data suggests this possibility may be worth further exploration.

The existence of large variation in LRE data at the LEA level within a state suggests that states may be prudent to thoroughly investigate their LRE data. Moreover, steps should be taken to improve technical assistance and supports to increase the reliability of the reporting of local LRE data. Recommendations are provided to assist special education administrators, at multiple levels, with the collection and reporting of accurate LRE data.

This work was funded by the Office of Special Education Programs via a Westat 2006 State Analysis Grant. The Northeast Regional Resource Center was the successful proposer and hired Bruce Bull of Education Data Services and Information Systems to conduct the work.

BACKGROUND INFORMATION

Data on the educational environments in which students with disabilities served under IDEA receive special education are classified, collected, reported, and often used at the national, state, and local level as an important indicator of special education service delivery. These data, referred to as educational environment, placement, or in this report Least Restrictive Environment (LRE) data, are sometimes used as a measure of the degree to which students with disabilities have access to the general education curriculum and are being educated in the least restrictive environment. These data are used by states and by the Office of Special Education Programs (OSEP) for important and consequential purposes. At the national level, states have been ranked by educational environment data as a way of targeting states for OSEP-directed technical assistance. At the state level, local district LRE data are sometimes used to determine state-to-local focused monitoring. Now placement data are required in states' State Performance Plans (SPPs) and Annual Performance Reports (APRs) and will be used by OSEP to make state determinations under Section 616 of IDEA 2004. Each State must collect valid and reliable information as needed to report annually to OSEP on the indicators established by the U.S. Secretary of Education for the State Performance Plans [34 CFR 300.601(b) and 20 U.S.C. 1416(b)]. OSEP annually reviews each state's performance report and makes a determination of the state's relative need for assistance and/or intervention in implementing the requirements of Part B of the Act.

Those not familiar with these high stakes LRE data might assume LRE placement definitions are uniformly understood and consistently applied when reporting LRE data to the state and subsequently to the federal level. However, there is a considerable degree of variability across states on the percentages of students reported to be receiving special education services in various LRE placement categories. Reviewing the IDEA Annual Reports to Congress or the data available on the www.ideadata.org Web site attests to state-to-state variation in LRE data. Much of this variation is due to real differences in the ways special education and related services are provided in different states. For example, the percentage of students served in private schools differs significantly across states across the U.S. (Appendix A has LRE differences for northeast states.)

In addition to state level differences, experienced IDEA Data Managers, SEA Directors of Special Education, SPP writers, and OSEP personnel, among others, can attest to widely varying LRE data among districts within a single state. Different placement descriptions, different levels of definitional understanding, challenges in calculating time in the general education classroom, attendance (or lack of) at instructional trainings, available resource materials, etc.—as well as differences in special education delivery—are “areas of interest” in looking at LRE variation within a state.

Knowing that cross-state differences in service delivery do exist, this study attempted to ascertain if factors, other than differences in service delivery models, might be contributing to the wide LRE variation demonstrated across and within the northeast states. The existence of variation in LRE data at the LEA and SEA level suggests that states may be prudent to similarly investigate the accuracy and inter-rater reliability of their LRE data. The focus of this study was Part B LRE data for the school age

population served under IDEA. The study did not address preschool children reported under Section 619.

POLICY ISSUES ADDRESSED

For this study, three specific policy questions were addressed regarding LRE data collection in states within the northeast region.

1. To what degree are state directions for reporting/counting children in specific placement categories consistent with OSEP directions?
2. To what degree are state directions to LEAs for reporting/counting children in specific placement categories consistent across states?
3. How do LEAs' understanding of those directions and the actual reporting of data compare or are comparable across LEAs within and across states?

Additionally, through the course of the investigation, a fourth policy question was developed and addressed:

4. What types of technical assistance and training are available to LEAs on classifying LRE placement information and what is their level of utilization and perceived value?

Answers to these questions are expected to help the region as a whole and specific SEAs within the northeast understand the reasons behind some of the variation in their LRE data.

METHOD

This section describes how information was gathered and used in this study. Details are included on: participants, materials used, and procedures followed to gather the desired LRE data.

Participants

The eight states of Region 1 (CT, ME, MA, NH, NJ, NY, RI, and VT) participated in this study. All eight states provided information about their policies for communicating LRE data collection information to their LEAs. However, only six of the eight states participated in the LEA survey that captured district level information on LRE. Within the confines of this federally funded study each participating state could have a maximum of nine LEA respondents to their state's survey. Two states were unable to secure nine completed surveys, and other states had instances where a respondent's survey was not adequately completed and could not be used. A total of 45 usable surveys were gathered from 54 possible across the six states (83%). Table 1 provides detail on the completed surveys by each state.

State	CT	MA	ME	NH	NJ	NY	RI	VT
Total Surveys	9	9	6	9	6	9	NA	NA
Usable Surveys	9	8	6*	8	6	8	NA	NA
Total	45 Useable Surveys from 6 States							
*Two ME surveys were partially completed and were used whenever possible.								

As shown in Table 2, the vast majority of survey respondents were local Special Education Directors (or the equivalent based on state preferred title).

Assistant Director of Special Education	1
Assistant Superintendent of Student Services	1
Committee on Special Education (CSE) Chairperson	2
Executive Director of Student Services and Special Education	1
Special Ed Secretary/Administrative Assistant /Child Count Data Entry Clerk	3
Special Education Director or Director of Special Education	37
Totals	45

Materials

This study gathered information through paper forms and electronic surveys. Each item is described below.

1. **Checklist of LRE Materials (Appendix B)** This form, usually completed by the Part B Data Manager, provided insight into the types of training/technical assistance states provided to their LEAs regarding the collection of LRE data. This information was later used in the LEA surveys.
2. **Process Form (Appendix C)** Completed onsite by the state Data Managers at the OSEP/ OSEP/Westat 2006 Overlapping Part B & Part C Data Meeting, this form provided the consultant with more insight into the processes used by each SEA relative to the collection of IDEA 618 data. Answers to specific LRE data collection questions were provided.
3. **Difficult Scenarios Shared** Based on their experience Data Managers were asked to provide the consultant with two examples of real scenarios that were difficult to determine the correct LRE category. Most Data Managers provided this to the consultant during the face-to-face meeting.
4. **Select Survey Tool** SelectSurvey.NET is the software tool the consultant used for the creation of the online surveys. The consultant created individual state surveys, which were housed on the consultant's server and formed the foundation for the collection of data used in this study. Each Data Manager

reviewed and approved their state's survey online before sharing the state-specific survey URL with their potential LEA respondents.

Each state survey consisted of two sets of questions. The first set inquired about the availability and usefulness of technical assistance and trainings designed to transfer LRE data knowledge from the SEA to the LEAs. Methods included for example, a Data Dictionary, hands-on-training, Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs) documents, availability of an SEA expert, etc. The second set of questions on each state survey contained special education placement scenarios. Respondents were asked to code these scenarios based on OSEP-established (and sometimes SEA-refined) LRE category definitions. See Appendix D for a blank copy of the generic survey instrument. The survey instrument contains the content used across the six state surveys.

Note that each state survey was unique. States were allowed to include additional scenarios, state-specific language, and add technical assistance/training activities, to make the survey as meaningful as possible for their state. State-specific survey modifications were also done to comply with the respondent restriction required of this study. Specifically, this was a federally funded study and therefore a maximum of nine respondents per survey was permitted in order to comply with federal paperwork burden policies and information gathering restrictions. Creating unique surveys for each state maximized the total number of potential respondents.

Procedures

The following are the procedures used in this study and the approximate date of the procedure.

1. **Fall 2005** Prior to the proposal being submitted, each SEA wrote a letter of support for the project. In most—but not all—cases, this support translated to involvement for the entirety of this study.
2. **March – November 2006** The contracted consultant and NERRC maintained frequent communication prior to and throughout the study. Ongoing emails and every other week teleconferences developed and maintained excellent communication. This was most helpful when small obstacles arose. At those points, NERRC knew the background and together the consultant and NERRC formulated immediate and effective solutions.
3. **April 2006** The consultant was invited and attended a regional meeting to describe the project to the northeast SEA Directors. He provided an overview of the study including the expected level of involvement from each state. The consultant asked SEA Directors to share information and handouts with state Part B Data Managers. As designed, after that regional meeting, most SEA project communication occurred between the consultant and the state IDEA Part B Data Managers.
4. **May 2006** The consultant held a 1-hour face-to-face introduction and work session with Part B Data Managers from the eight northeast states at the NERRC-hosted

luncheon held in conjunction with the OSEP/Westat 2006 Overlapping Part B & Part C Data Meeting. After an introduction to the study, each IDEA Data Manager completed forms describing their SEA's process and materials (e.g., definitions, trainings) used to collect and report LRE data. IDEA Data Managers were also asked to provide examples of "challenging to code" scenarios. These were used later in the state surveys. (See Appendix B Checklist of LRE Materials and Appendix C Process Form.)

5. **May – June 2006** The consultant drafted scenarios that might ideally work in all/most states in the study. Draft scenarios were shared with NERRC and Data Managers.
6. **May – June 2006** The consultant drafted an additional section of the survey to collect information on SEA training and technical assistance associated with LRE data collection.
7. **May – August 2006** Based on each state's readiness, the consultant developed draft state-specific surveys based on established scenarios and additional state input. Data Managers reviewed survey drafts and provided feedback. The draft and review process was repeated until each state-specific survey was acceptable to that state. The consultant and SEA Data Manager tested and reviewed an online draft of that state's survey. The consultant made changes when necessary to the online survey draft. Once finalized, the consultant removed all practice data and sent the URL link to SEA Data Manager.
8. **June – August 2006** The consultant developed and provided states with draft documents to be used by SEAs when introducing the study to potential LEA respondents.
9. **June – September 2006** SEAs sent information and the URL to potential LEA respondents. Each state selected the LEA respondents from their state. In some cases, SEAs solicited only nine LEAs. In other cases SEAs expanded the solicitation to more than nine knowing the software was designed to close the survey after nine responses had been received. Data Managers shared in conversation that in many cases they targeted LEAs that they anticipated would be more "responsive" (that is, had a higher likelihood of following through on the SEA request). Given the non-representational limits of the study, the convenience sample methodology was an accepted method of including LEAs as respondents in the study. All data from LEAs were collected and reported anonymously and directly to the consultant's server. All responses affiliated with a particular state remained anonymous at the LEA level.
10. **June – September 2006** The consultant maintained communication with Data Managers keeping them apprised of respondent status. (Frequently, the consultant encouraged additional SEA communication to LEAs to increase respondent numbers.)

11. **June – September 2006** Once the maximum number of respondents was reached, the survey was programmed to stop accepting additional data.
12. **September – December 2006** The consultant removed, aggregated, and cleaned data and conducted analysis, drafted the report, and reviewed report with NERRC and Westat. The report was revised based on Westat feedback and a final version was submitted.

RESULTS

Respondents

Survey respondents had, on average, 10.7 years of experience in their current position. When asked, "What is your level of confidence in the accuracy of the data you are reporting to your SEA on the placement classifications of students with disabilities?" respondents overall reported a high confidence rating (4.4 on a 5-point scale).

LRE Training and Technical Assistance

The survey (Appendix D) asked respondents their a) knowledge of the availability, b) engagement with, and c) perceived value of, different types of SEA training and technical assistance methods associated with LRE knowledge transfer. Detailed technical assistance and training data by state and multi-state are in Appendix E.

Respondents within the same state were often inconsistent in their knowledge of the availability of different types of LRE data collection training and technical assistance provided in their state. Table 3 provides a summary of the number of respondents who believed a particular type of assistance existed (availability) out of the total number of respondents who answered that question from that state. Shaded cells indicate that there were consistent responses within a state. No shading indicates a lack of respondent consistency as to the existence of an assist. Consistency was defined as all, or all but one, of the respondents within a state indicating that the assist existed or did not exist. Eleven types of technical assistance across six states results in a total of 66 "cases" or cells. Thirty-three of the 66 cells are shaded showing that in half of the cases, there was agreement within the state that the type of technical assistance was available. In the other 33 cases, half the measures, state respondents were inconsistent in their knowledge of the existence of LRE technical assistance and trainings.

The overall rate of consistency within states of respondents' reported understanding of the existence or non-existence of different forms of TA within the state ranged from a low of 18% in Massachusetts to a high of 73% in New Jersey.

Type of Training or Technical Assistance	CT	MA	ME	NH	NJ	NY
1. Data Dictionary	2 of 9	1 of 8	0 of 4	4 of 8	2 of 6	4 of 8
2. Expert Available Via Phone	9 of 9	5 of 8	3 of 4	7 of 8	6 of 6	7 of 8
3. Expert Available Via E-mail	9 of 9	5 of 8	3 of 4	7 of 8	5 of 6	5 of 8
4. Colleague Available	9 of 9	5 of 8	2 of 4	7 of 8	6 of 6	7 of 8
5. Training Video	2 of 9	2 of 8	1 of 6	0 of 8	0 of 6	0 of 8
6. Frequently Asked Questions and Answers Posted	5 of 9	5 of 8	1 of 4	2 of 8	5 of 6	5 of 8
7. Documents (other than Data Dictionary)	9 of 9	4 of 8	2 of 4	7 of 8	6 of 6	8 of 8
8. Face-to-face Training	9 of 9	6 of 8	3 of 6	5 of 8	4 of 6	6 of 8
9. Hands-on Training	2 of 9	4 of 8	2 of 6	4 of 8	2 of 6	2 of 8
10. Automated Help Inside an Application	2 of 9	3 of 8	3 of 5	1 of 8	1 of 6	4 of 8
11. Distance Learning	0 of 9	1 of 8	3 of 6	1 of 8	1 of 6	1 of 8
Summary of state respondents' agreement that all or all but one respondent agreed a TA type existed or did not exist.	6 / 11 (55%)	2 / 11 (18%)	5 / 11 (45%)	7 / 11 (64%)	8 / 11 (73%)	5 / 11 (45%)

* Shaded cells indicate consistent responses within a state, defined as all or all but one of the respondents within a state indicating that the assist existed or did not exist.

To ascertain a measure of utilization or "engagement with" technical assistance, the survey asked respondents who indicated that a technical assistance or training existed, if they had used (engaged) that particular type of assist in the last 24 months. Those who had engaged with the assist were asked to assign a value to that technical assistance. Table 4 displays the percentage of those engaging with each type of technical assistance or training and the mean value they assigned to the assist. (Technical assistance and training are displayed in descending order based on mean values.) The availability of a Data Dictionary is the most highly valued form of technical assistance, as reported by the five respondents who used it. Based on a frequency count, the three most frequently reported *available* forms of TA were "Expert Available Via Phone" ($n=37$), "Colleague Available" ($n=36$) and "Documents other than Data Dictionary" ($n=36$). *Utilization* is the percent of respondents that reported using an available assist. The two forms of technical assistance with the highest reported utilization are "Colleague Available" (83%) and "Frequently Asked Questions and Answers" (83%).

Table 4. Percent of respondents who used TA and their perceived value of TA used

Type of Training or Technical Assistance	Respondents who Used/Engaged the TA Of Those Saying it was Available	Mean Value 1 (low) – 5 (high)
Data Dictionary	5 used of the 13 saying was available (38%)	4.80 (\underline{n} = 5)
Expert Available Via Phone	28 used of the 37 saying was available (76%)	4.39 (\underline{n} =28)
Expert Available Via E-mail	26 used of the 34 saying was available (76%)	4.27 (\underline{n} = 26)
Colleague Available	30 used of the 36 saying was available (83%)	4.27 (\underline{n} = 30)
Training Video	1 used of the 5 saying was available (20%)	4.00 (\underline{n} = 1)
Frequently Asked Questions and Answers	19 used of the 23 saying was available (83%)	4.00 (\underline{n} = 19)
Documents (other than Data Dictionary)	27 used of the 36 saying was available (75%)	3.85 (\underline{n} = 27)
Face-to-face Training	23 used of the 33 saying was available (70%)	3.83 (\underline{n} = 23)
Hands-on Training	12 used of the 16 saying was available (75%)	3.67 (\underline{n} = 12)
Automated Help Inside an Application	7 used of the 14 saying was available (50%)	3.43 (\underline{n} = 7)
Distance Learning	2 used of the 7 saying was available (29%)	3.00 (\underline{n} = 2)

After being asked about their knowledge, use and perceived value of different types of training and TA, respondents were asked to rate the frequency that they used each of four different methods when faced with a difficult to code LRE scenario. (See Table 5.) The highest mean rating (3.60) was earned for “Reviewing TA Materials,” compared with “Take Best Guess,” which had the lowest mean rating of 2.42.

Table 5. Mean frequency of using different assists when determining difficult to code LRE situations (5-point scale 1-never to 5-always)

Take Best Guess	Call Someone at the SEA	Ask Colleague	Review TA Materials
2.42	3.35	3.49	3.60

State Definitions

A review was conducted of each state’s LRE definitions. (See Appendix F for complete definitions from northeast states.) Most states used the OSEP language as provided in OSEP’s Section 618 report forms. However two states that were surveyed modified the language defining the different LRE placements. New Jersey used (2005-06) the OSEP-proposed Part B language for the 2006-07 school year. Massachusetts added descriptors (full inclusion, partial inclusion, and substantially separate classroom) to the

time outside regular class placement categories. Procedurally, each state's definitions were included verbatim in their state specific survey. Definitional differences are shown by state in Table 6.

Key	OSEP Definitions NH, ME, NY, CT	NJ Language	MA Language
< 21	Special education outside regular class less than 21 percent of day	Included in general ed setting at least 80% of day	<u>All ages, Full Inclusion</u> Special education services outside the General Education Classroom less than 21% of the time
21-60	Special education outside regular class at least 21 percent of day and no more than 60 percent of day	Included in general ed between 40% and 80% of day	<u>All ages, Partial Inclusion</u> Special education services outside the General Education Classroom 21% to 60% of the time
> 60	Special education outside regular class more than 60 percent of day.	Included in general ed up to 39% of the day	<u>All ages, Substantially Separate Classroom</u> Special education services outside the General Education Classroom more than 60% of the time
PuS	Public separate school	Same as OSEP	All ages, Public Separate Day School
PrS	Private separate school	Same as OSEP	All ages, Private Separate Day School
PuR	Public residential facility	Same as OSEP	All ages, Public Residential Institutional Facilities
PrR	Private residential facility	Same as OSEP	All ages, Residential School
H	Homebound/Hospital	Same as OSEP	Homebound/Hospital

Categorization of School-Age Scenarios

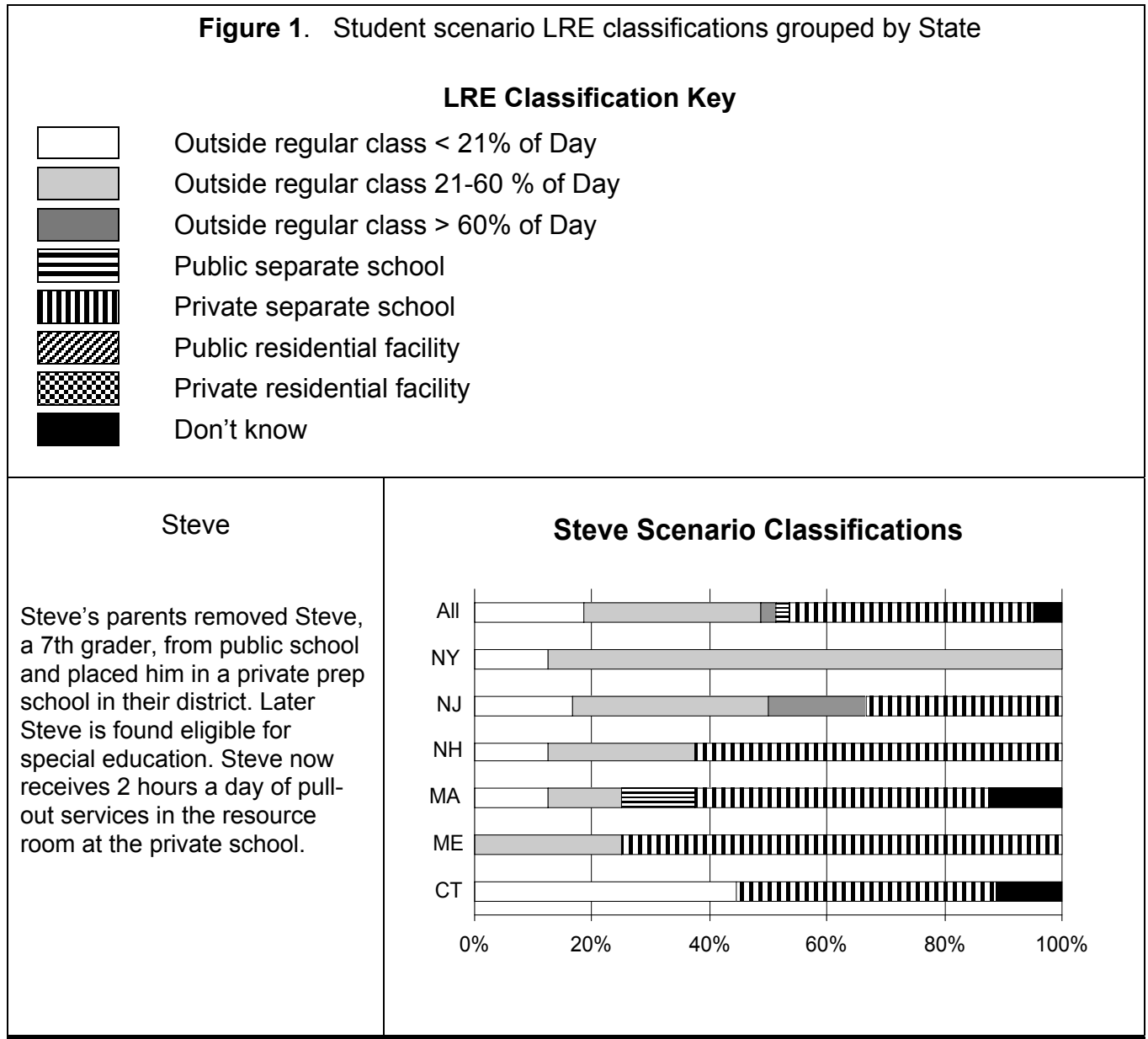
Throughout this study the question, "What *is* the 'correct' answer?" was asked by respondents. The study was not, however, designed to determine the correctness of a particular scenario classification. Rather, the study measured state and regional respondent differences in classifying LRE placement scenarios. To measure this variation, the last part of the survey queried respondents on their categorization of school age special education LRE scenarios. Respondents were asked to classify the placements based on their own state-specific LRE definitions. (State-specific scenarios, included in some state surveys, are not reported in this report.)

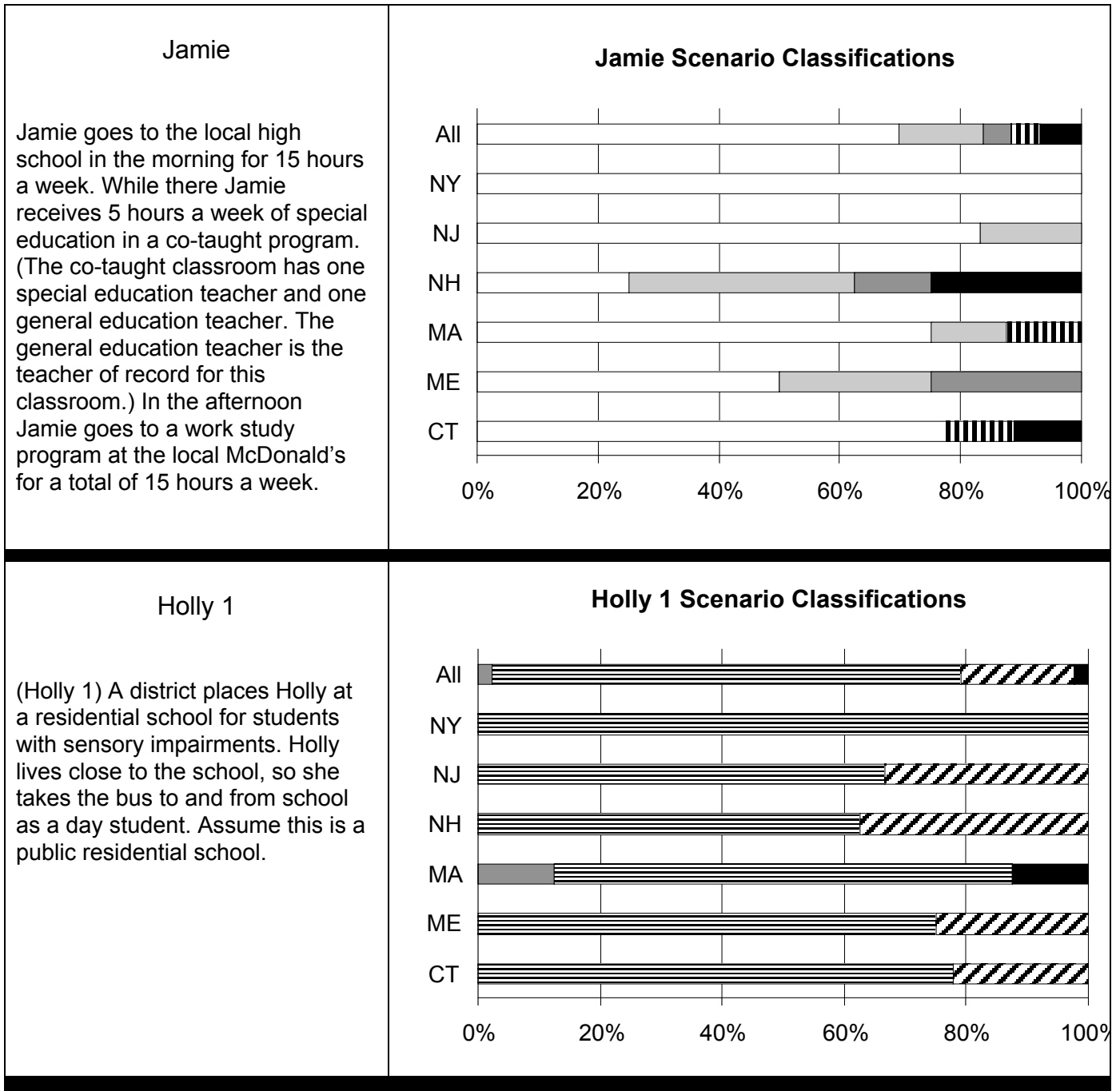
These classification findings demonstrate inconsistency both across the region and within each state when classifying the same scenario. Results are presented here in two figures. Data are first viewed in scenario-specific horizontal stacked bars (Figure 1). The text of each scenario is presented. To the right of the scenario text is a graph

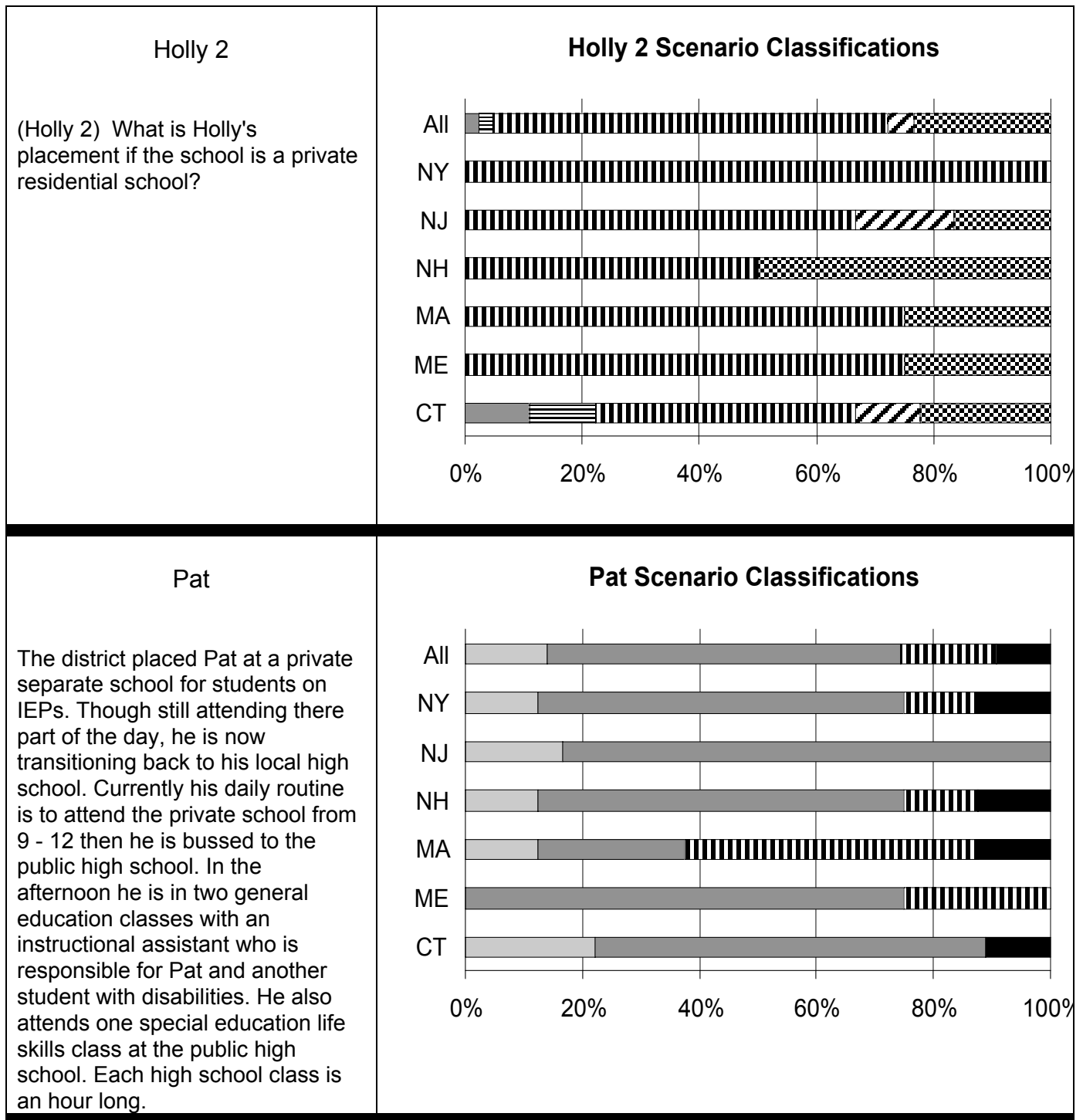
depicting the percentages of LRE placement responses reported for that scenario by each surveyed state. The responses from each state are shown on one horizontal bar. Additionally, the top bar in each graph (labeled All) shows the aggregate of all study respondents for that scenario. The purpose of this view is to show the differences and similarities across states with respect to each scenario, with a particular emphasis on regional variation.

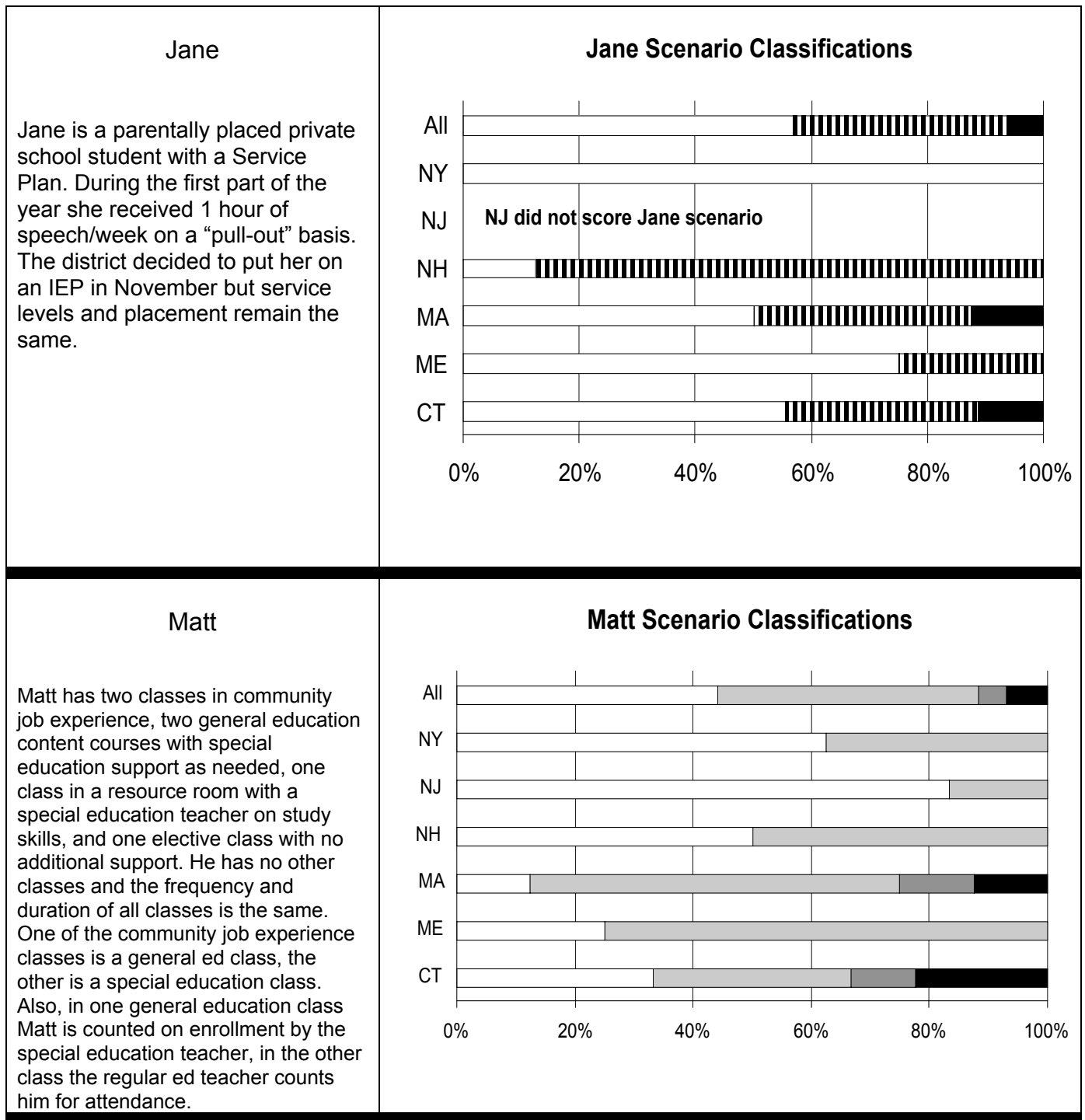
Perfect agreement would be each bar for each state having the same color/pattern. This would indicate that respondents across states in the study classified the same scenario with the same LRE placement code.

Figure 1. Student scenario LRE classifications grouped by State

















As can be seen in Figure 1, respondents across the states were inconsistent in how they coded these difficult scenarios. None of the scenarios show high levels of agreement across the states. For example, for the Holly 2 scenario, five different placement categories were used with varying degrees across state respondents. There were no scenarios in which states were in agreement on the appropriate placement category. However, some scenarios show similar variation patterns.

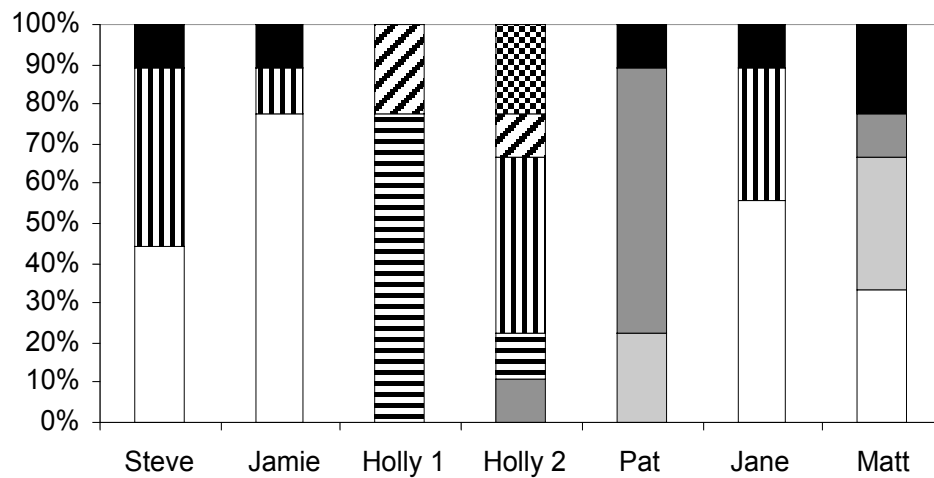
The next set of graphs (Figure 2) displays the same data in vertical bar graphs with a state focus. Each vertical bar graph shows how the respondents from a given state classified each scenario. The purpose of this view is to show the state specific variation or patterns of LRE placement classifications.

Figure 2. State classifications by scenario

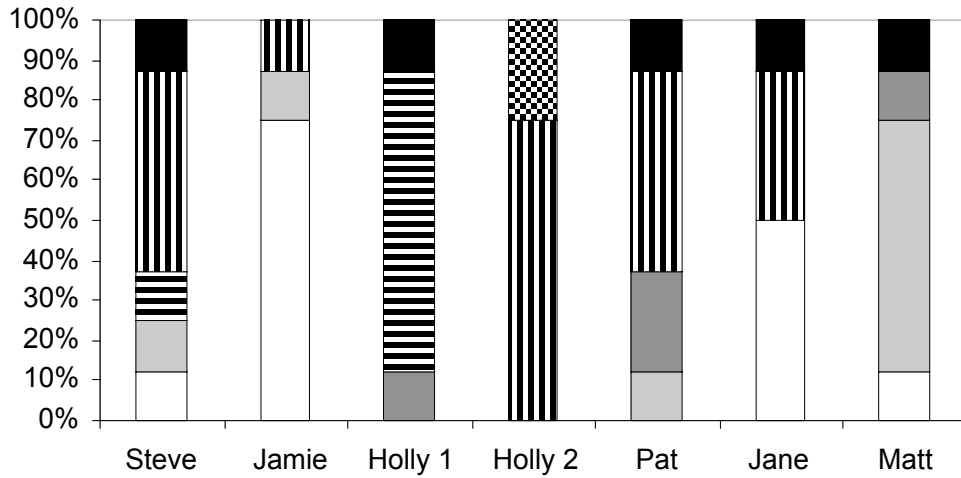
LRE Classification Key

-  Outside regular class < 21% of Day
-  Outside regular class 21-60 % of Day
-  Outside regular class > 60% of Day
-  Public separate school
-  Private separate school
-  Public residential facility
-  Private residential facility
-  Don't know

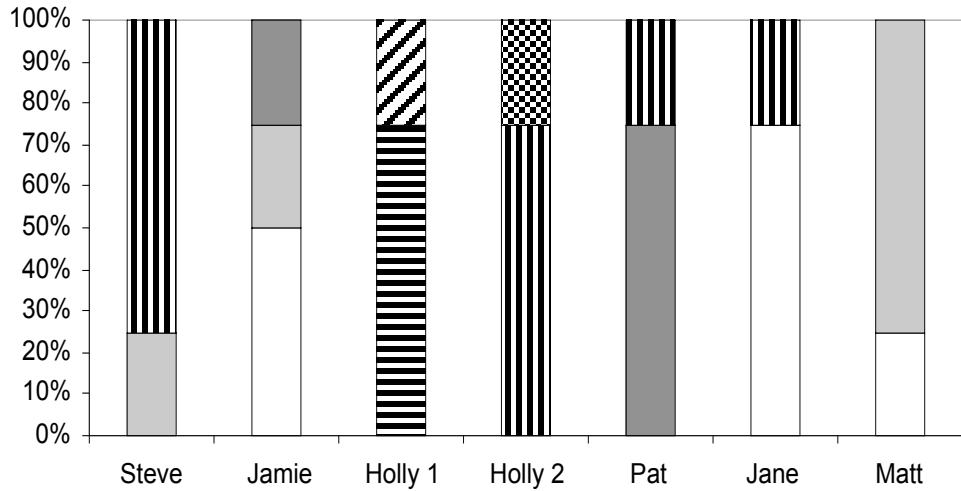
CT Scenario Classifications



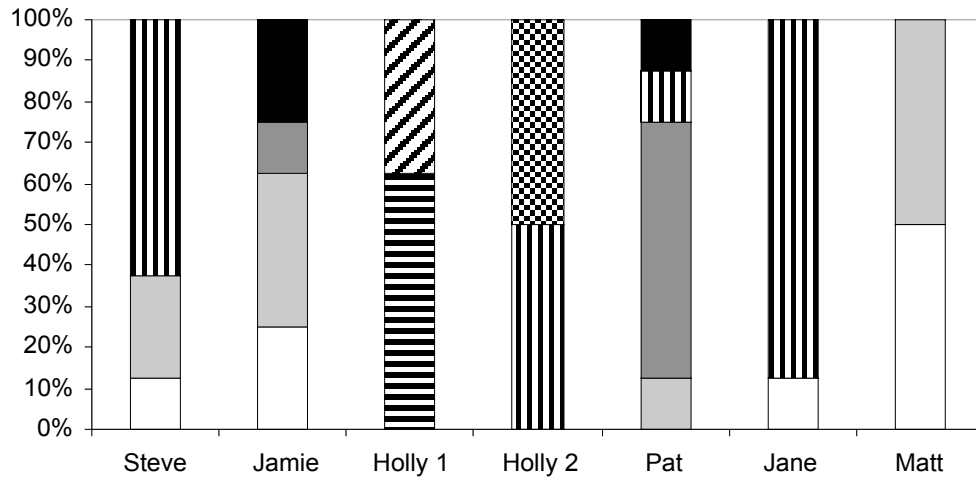
MA Scenario Classifications



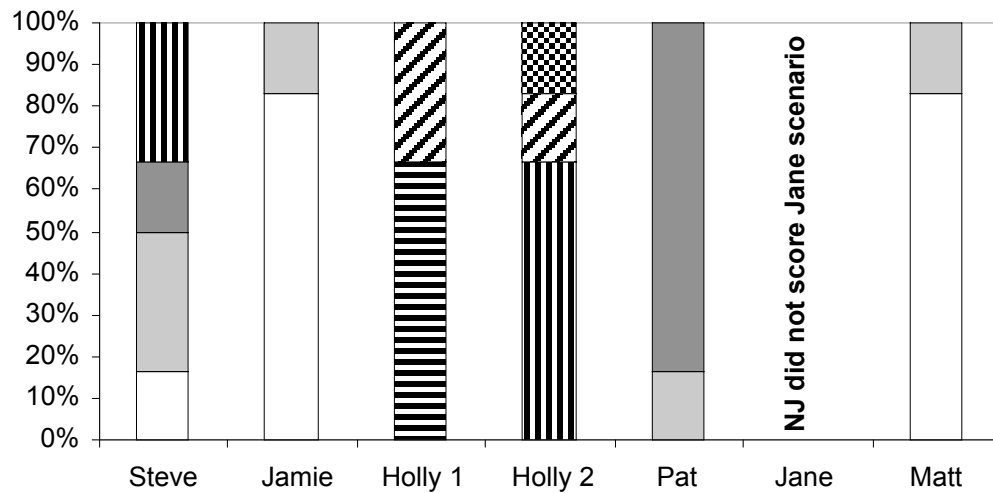
ME Scenario Classifications

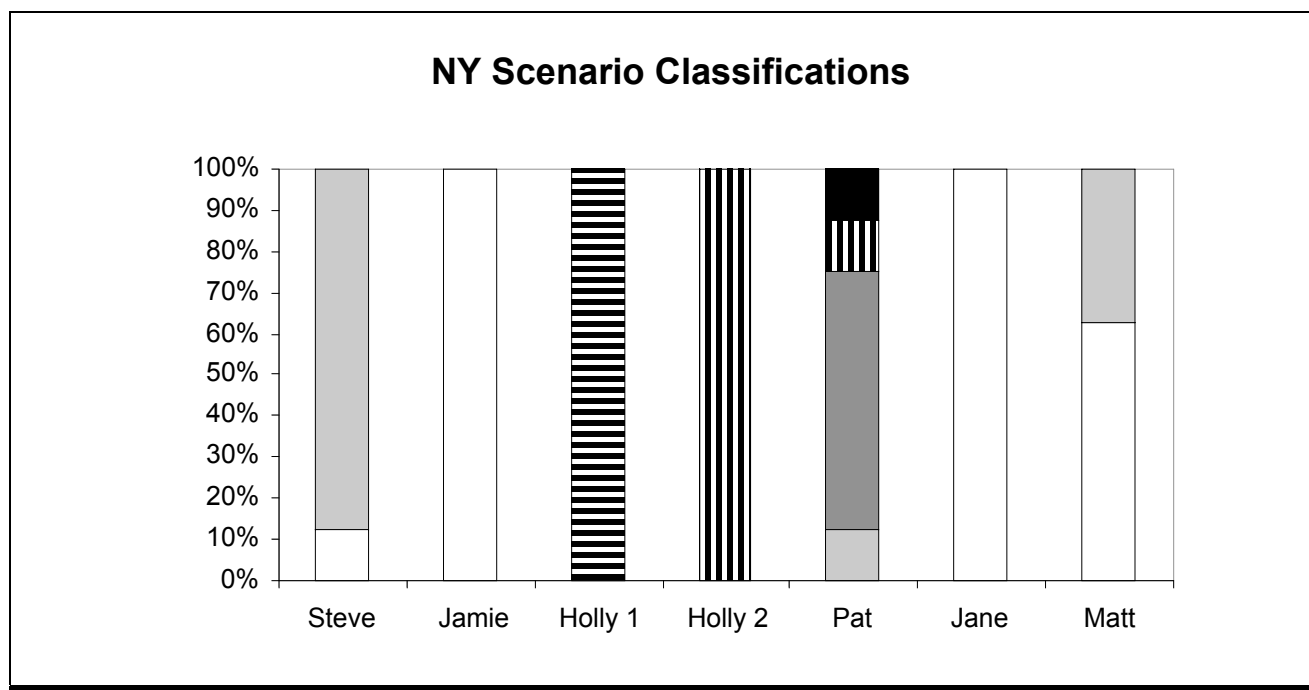


NH Scenario Classifications



NJ Scenario Classifications





Again, ideally the bars would be a single color for each scenario indicating agreement among state respondents on each scenario. The more colors in the stacked bar, the less agreement existed. Except for the state of NY, *there were differences within each state on every scenario*. In New York, there was unanimity on the classification for four of the seven scenarios: Jamie, Holly 1, Holly 2, and Jane. No other state demonstrated 100% agreement on any of the scenarios.

Figures 1 and 2 show very little agreement among respondents in how scenarios were classified. With the exception of New York, within state agreement was essentially non-existent. Some classification patterns do exist across states, suggesting that respondents across states have similar challenges when classifying difficult to code placements. Appendix G contains a data table with further analyses of the scenario classification data.

Finally, at the very end of the survey respondents were given the opportunity to provide feedback or comments. Three general comments represented a broader perspective and have potential implications for data collection practices in other states, as noted below:

1. These are the (types of) examples that I find helpful for directors or supervisors to have correct responses.
2. I think the tendency is (to) err on the side of being more conservative when there is doubt. It would be so much easier if rather than a percentage, the State provide the number of minutes (i.e., 300 minutes or less per week vs. 21% or less, etc.).
3. More training needs to be offered . . . at least more specific resources on the DOE site.

DISCUSSION

The purpose of this study was to determine if circumstances other than differences in service delivery models might affect LRE data within and across states in the northeast region. The study focused on LRE placement classifications for school age IDEA Part B students.

Three specific policy questions were addressed regarding LRE data and a fourth policy question was added during the study. The additional question addressed the availability, utility and perceived value of the various types of LRE technical assistance and training SEAs make available to LEAs. The policy questions investigated were:

1. To what degree are state directions for reporting/counting children in specific placement categories consistent with OSEP directions?
2. To what degree are state directions to LEAs for reporting/counting children in specific placement categories consistent across states?
3. How do LEAs' understanding of those directions and the actual reporting of data compare or are comparable across LEAs within and across states?
4. What types of technical assistance and training are available to LEAs on classifying LRE placement information and what is their level of utilization and perceived value?

The findings of this study suggest that there are very real differences in how both LEAs within a state and LEAs across states interpret and classify the same school age special education LRE scenarios. It is the overall finding of this study that inter-rater reliability issues, rather than cross-state differences in special education delivery models, contribute to the variation in LRE data exhibited in the northeast. The remainder of this section will acknowledge the limitations of the study, highlight important results in light of the policy issues addressed, provide recommendations for future studies in this area, and most importantly provide recommendations to be considered at the state, regional, and national level to address or alleviate potential inter-rater reliability issues concerning LRE data.

Limitations

The following limitations affected this study, listed in descending order of influence.

First and foremost, the study restricted the number of responses that could be collected. Federal funding of this study, without OMB clearance, restricted the number of LEA surveys administered to nine per state, therefore the sample was not representative of any state or the northeast region. Once this restriction was realized, the study design was modified to maximize the number of respondents that could be included. This was done by creating unique surveys for each state. However, the resulting sample was too small to draw any definitive state or regional conclusions.

Second, the respondent group itself may not have been reflective of those most involved in categorizing and reporting LRE data. Although the survey was designed for

anyone associated with LRE data determination and transference, 37 out of 45 (82%) of respondents were local Special Education Directors. In many cases, local Special Education Directors are not involved with the day-to-day student-level data issues such as LRE classification. Although the respondent group had more than 10 years average tenure in their current positions and self-reported a high confidence level in the accuracy of LRE data submitted to their SEA, their actual level of *involvement* with LRE data and determining LRE classification was not known. It could be that their administrative position limits their awareness of the nuances sometimes associated with classifying such data. The predominance of local Special Education Directors as respondents may have occurred because SEAs were directly involved with contacting potential LEAs to complete the survey. This may have made local Special Education Directors feel obligated to complete the survey themselves. Additionally, in most states the survey was open during the summer months—a time when local Special Education Directors are usually more available than other staff.

A third limitation was that two states limited their involvement to sharing information only on state level processes. No survey was conducted of LEAs within these two states. In both cases, personnel changes at the state level contributed to this decision. In light of the loss of two states, these findings do not reflect the entirety of Region 1.

Fourth, the timing of the survey administration study was difficult. The study was funded late in the school year. Creating the surveys took until the end of May for the first state and later for other states due to their workloads and internal schedules. Summer was a difficult time to get closure on the state-specific surveys. Repeated extensions of the survey deadline (through September) occurred in an effort to maximize the number of LEA responses.

Finally, not surprisingly, states had different levels of interest and involvement. Some states got off to a fast start—others kept this project “on their desk” for many weeks before they began. One state had three involved people reviewing survey language, editing scenarios, and making recommendations for their state survey. Some states had to wait for approval from their SEA Director who was directly involved with reviewing. In other states, the Part B Data Manager was (by experience or default) empowered to make decisions and move the work forward. As such, the frequency, duration, and level of communication across states varied greatly.

Policy Issue Results

The purpose of this study was to collect data from states in the northeast and use the results to address three (original) specific LRE data policy questions and one additional technical assistance question. Findings relative to the policy questions are reviewed below. Policy questions 1 and 2 are combined due to their similar nature and the availability of data used to answer these two questions.

Policy Questions 1 and 2

1. *To what degree are state directions for reporting/counting children in specific placement categories consistent with OSEP directions?*
2. *To what degree are state directions to LEAs for reporting/counting children in specific placement categories consistent across states?*

Question 1 inquires how each state's directions differ from the OSEP directions. Question 2 inquires how state directions differ across northeast states. To answer these questions, this study looked at the LRE definitions each state used. The consultant asked each state to provide the *exact* LRE classification name and LRE definition each state used in 2005-06 for purposes of collecting and reporting 2005-06 LRE data. Each state provided that information (or acknowledged that they used the OSEP definitions.). (See Table 6 for a summary of LRE categories by each state in the survey, and Appendix F for detail on state school age LRE definitions for all eight states in the northeast.) For the two states that did not participate in the survey (VT and RI) LRE categories were gathered from state IEPs.

Five of the eight states (CT, ME, NH, NY, and VT) used the exact OSEP 2005-06 LRE categories and definitions. The definitions used by the three remaining states (MA, NJ, RI) are described below, with specific reference to how any changes *might* affect LRE data.

Massachusetts

Massachusetts uses a slightly different definition for the OSEP setting known as "Special Education outside the regular class less than 21% of the day." In Massachusetts, this setting is entitled:

All ages, Full Inclusion: Special education services outside the General Education Classroom less than 21% of the time.

The addition of the term "full inclusion" (and the additions of the terms "partial inclusion" and "substantially separate classroom" in the next two OSEP percent of day categories) *may* have the undesired consequence of confusing some staff that have the responsibility to classify and report LEA data. Hopefully, the vast majority of Massachusetts categorizers read the entirety of the definitions and understand the progression associated with time outside the general education classroom. However, the additional descriptors of "full inclusion" and "partial inclusion" could inadvertently cause some to misclassify certain students. This seems most possible when classifying those students receiving a small part (less than 21% of the day) of their special education outside the regular class. Instead of being correctly placed in the Massachusetts category with the "full inclusion" descriptor, the unfamiliar might put such students in the category with the "partial inclusion" descriptor. This incorrect assumption could occur if they interpreted students receiving less than 100% of their special education outside the regular education classroom as being only partially

included and therefore placed them in the second percentage category with the “partial inclusion” label.

Reviewing aggregate Massachusetts data substantiates that this topic may merit further investigation. If the term “full inclusion” would increase the likelihood that some students (who should correctly be classified in the “outside regular class less than 21% category”) are mistakenly placed in the 21 – 60% category, then Massachusetts’s data might show a proportionally lower percent of students in the “less than 21% category” than other states. Indeed, based on the 2004 data¹ (the latest data available when the proposal was written) at www.ideadata.org Massachusetts had the lowest percentage of students categorized “outside the regular class less than 21% of the day” of any northeastern state at 45.88%. Compared with their neighboring states, Massachusetts is 1.25 standard deviations below the northeast mean (59.33%) for this category. Not unsurprisingly, their 2004 data were the highest (32.91%) of any northeastern state for “outside regular class at least 21 percent of day and no more than 60 percent of day.” In this category—a category Massachusetts labels “partial inclusion”—Massachusetts is 1.37 standard deviations above the regional norm. Overall, Massachusetts data and its comparison to other states within the region, suggests that this state’s placement definitions may be worthy of further exploration.

Massachusetts includes an “All Ages” descriptor within their Part B LRE titles. Although the focus of this study is strictly school age Part B (not Preschool/619), this was deemed to have no affect on findings for this study.

New Jersey

New Jersey adopted and used in 2005-06 language that was proposed by OSEP for 2006-07. Due to the consistency of the language in the OSEP definitions, this early adoption of OSEP language is not a definitional change or reinterpretation of existing categories. Conceptually, there exists a one-to-one relationship between the OSEP categories of 2005-06 and the OSEP categories of 2006-07. Because the New Jersey changes were clearly designed to emulate the future OSEP changes and these changes only affected three LRE categories (percentage of day calculations), this definitional shift is believed to have no affect on New Jersey’s year-to-year LRE data. Specific to this study, the language change had no affect and kept New Jersey’s data inline with the majority of other states.²

Rhode Island

Rhode Island does not ask LEAs to categorize student LRE placement. Instead the SEA collects data on a series of questions. (See excerpt from RI IEP in Appendix F.)

¹ During the course of this study the 2005 data were released. MA retained the highest percentage of all northeast states in the 21-60% category, with slight improvement in their under 21% category moving them up to an average of 49.27%, just under one standard deviation below the northeast region as a whole.

² Anytime change occurs—even simple language—there is potential likelihood of data shift. This can be due to changing databases, documents, applications, trainings, etc.

With these data, the SEA staff determines LRE categories by calculating the percentage of time in the regular class for each student. (Because their LEA constituency is not asked to categorize student LRE data, the survey portion of this study was not applicable in Rhode Island and was a large factor influencing their non-participation in the survey.) This study attempted to have those at the Rhode Island SEA who make the LRE placement determinations respond to the survey and/or provide a phone interview with the consultant on the Rhode Island process. Because Rhode Island did not choose to participate, it is unknown how the state's LRE data categories classified at the SEA level affects their data. Reviewing the Rhode Island data for 2004 and 2005 shows no particular anomalies.

Policy Question 3

- 3. How do LEAs' understanding of those directions and the actual reporting of data compare or are comparable across LEAs within and across states?*

To truly answer policy question 3 a representative sample of LEAs would be needed from within each state. Since that was not possible within the limitations of this study, data were gathered that attempted to explore the questions surrounding LEA inter-judge reliability within and across northeast states.

While a larger sample is needed to come to a definitive conclusion, the individual state graphs in Figure 2 suggest that LEA respondents in this study were not consistent within their states in classifying LRE placement scenarios. Except for the respondents from New York, in which a high degree of inter-rater reliability was demonstrated, respondents within each of the other states surveyed were never in total agreement regarding how to classify a single scenario.

If respondents within a state are not in agreement in how to classify a scenario, it follows that little cross-state agreement would exist for the same scenario. The "all" state bar in the graphs in Figure 1 shows little agreement across states with respect to how respondents classified a scenario. There are, however, patterns of responses across states. This could mean that respondents in different states struggle similarly in their classification process. Although the study is based on a small and non-representative sample from the northeast, the findings indicate a need for cohesive and uniform training and technical assistance methods that cross state borders. Many of the recommendations below suggest regional and national (not just state) approaches for improving the reliability of the LRE classifications.

In sum, generally states in the northeast (with the possible exception of New York) were not consistent in the way they individually classified the LRE placement of school age special education scenarios. While this study focused on the northeast states, there is no reason to suspect states in the northeast have any more or less internal LRE consistency than other regions of the U.S.

Policy Question 4

In an effort to proactively provide additional information that might assist these SEAs this study took on a fourth policy question as part of this work.

4. What types of technical assistance and training are available to LEAs on classifying LRE placement information and what is their level of utilization and perceived value?

Tables 3 and 4 presented data from questions designed to elicit respondents' a) knowledge of availability, b) engagement with, and c) perceived value of different types of SEA training and technical assistance. Results show that the respondents favored targeted technical assistance, that is, technical assistance designed to answer specific questions when needed. Data Dictionary, Expert Availability and Colleagues are examples of providing targeted (as opposed to general) assistance.

The availability of a Data Dictionary is the most highly valued form of technical assistance, as reported by five respondents. (However, as reported in Appendix E, the existence of a Data Dictionary was never reported by a majority of respondents in any state, casting some doubt on respondent's understanding of a Data Dictionary.) Generally, types of assistance characterized as "interactive" scored high. It seems important for respondents to communicate with others about a specific LRE placement issue—especially when they need immediate assistance. Trainings of a scheduled nature were noticeably less valued by respondents. It could be that such trainings are more general in nature—however the content of trainings was not part of this study.

Some specific training improvements are included in the recommendations. With respect to the existence of training and technical assistance there was noticeable lack of knowledge among respondents about what training and TA is available within their state. (See Appendix E for more detailed data.) There was also considerable range in the degree of within state agreement regarding the availability of particular forms of assistance. The rate of agreement within states in terms of availability of particular forms of TA within the state ranged from a low of 18% in Massachusetts to a high of 73% in New Jersey. This may in part be explained by the fact that the majority of respondents were local Special Education Directors—not necessarily the primary audience for trainings and ongoing TA on data collection. However, even local Special Education Directors should be expected to have an awareness of the types of SEA training and technical assistance available to their local staff. This is especially important when new personnel come into a position and may be inquiring of their Special Education Director about what available assistance.

Training and technical assistance results influence the recommendations noted later in this section. It is hoped that the summary results—especially at the individual state level—will be useful to each state in this study. Logically reviewing training materials and processes would assist LEA staff in improving inter-rater reliability.

Suggestions for Future Studies

The following suggestions are provided to assist future investigators of special education LRE classification.

1. Expand the sample. Any future study would do well to capture the input of many more respondents—ideally collect data on the universe of LEAs within a state.
2. To the extent possible, use the same survey instrument. This will not only limit bias that can inadvertently be built into instruments by language choice, survey length, question order—but will simplify the development, streamline the communication, and reduce administration functions.
3. If administering the survey via the web (recommended), program the survey software so that respondents that do not complete the survey are encouraged to do so before exiting. In this study, a small number of respondents started the survey but only answered a few questions before stopping. This made their results basically unusable. Given the limited number of respondents allowed per state, this was especially troublesome.
4. Consider surveying multiple respondents within a district. For example, survey the LRE data knowledge of the Special Education Director *and* data secretary *and* a special education teacher. This would greatly increase the chance of accessing the person most likely to make LRE data classifications within that district. Second, it would provide insight into the LRE data knowledge of distinct groups of personnel employed in special education positions.
5. Future investigations may wish to gather information on what would make selected trainings and technical assistance on LRE more or less useful.
6. When possible, gather survey data from special education personnel during the school year, outside the months of June – August.
7. Clearly communicate to State Directors of Special Education what commitments are necessary for study participation. Ask them to communicate these commitments to the IDEA Data Managers. Helping the SEA understand the state benefits of the study (e.g., target areas for training) may help ensure participation and responsiveness.

State, Regional, and National Recommendations

Aggregate LRE placement data are regularly reviewed and the results of LRE data collections can determine intervention at the state or federal level. These data are a measure for determining the degree to which students with disabilities have access to the general education curriculum and are receiving special education and related services in the least restrictive environment. Ideally, these data would be reliable and accurate and exhibit a very high degree of inter-rater agreement. Without acceptably high rates of inter-rater reliability, data are not comparable within or across states. Based on findings from this study, recommendations are made for improving LRE data reliability within LEAs, within a state, within a region, and therefore nationally. Within these recommendations “state” refers to State Departments of Education, “regional”

refers to Regional Resource Center (RRC) regions, and “national” refers to the assistance available via Westat /OSEP.

1. *Discuss different ways scenarios are classified.* (State, Regional, National)

In this study many districts within a state classified a scenario differently from other districts within the same state. Frequent and open discussion—not lecture—that seeks to understand different interpretations can begin to inform documents and trainings that can help address state variation. To the extent this can be done regionally, or even nationally (through Data Manager meetings and discussion of common training materials) less variation will eventually be found in LRE data. Encouraging open discussion with peer-to-peer learning can move a state, region, and in time the country, towards greatly improved LRE inter-rater agreement.

2. *Update training materials* (Regional, National)

Develop regional and/or national training and TA materials specifically to assist SEAs in working with LEAs that, based on the data, *may* be experiencing difficulty in correctly coding LRE placements. Since states train on LRE in various ways, providing some somewhat standardized training materials for SEAs would be useful. Similarly to the present study, consider an investigation of how definitions, technical assistance, training and other factors might be affecting LRE data in states or regions. Then design materials accordingly.

3. *Create an extensive list of hard-to-code scenarios.* (State, Regional, National)

Collect the hardest-to-code real life scenarios at the local, state, regional, and national level. Gather and record all the facts available on the student in question. Change the details so it remains anonymous and determine the correct placement code. (This could be done by a well-informed and representative committee of experts.) Then build an online searchable and dynamic database where users can look up the scenarios on the Web. This would provide users at all levels with similar exemplars as well as an excellent teaching tool.

4. *Hotline for hard-to-code scenarios.* (State, Regional, National)

Respondents in this study reported high value to the availability of an expert being available via phone or email to assist with LRE coding. States might consider developing a customer hotline during the child count reporting period to immediately (within one working day) answer any LRE placement questions. Ideally, Westat / OSEP could provide this same level of timely response when SEA Data Managers have similar questions. State IDEA Data Managers need to be seen as responsive to their LEA constituents and the “teachable moment” is immediately after a question is asked. To the extent that the most difficult to code scenarios could be pre-captured and classified in state, regional, or national training materials (#2 above), an immediate national hotline would be less needed.

5. *Improve state level trainings.* (State, Regional, National)

Based on this study, state level trainings to LEAs of a face-to-face and hands-on nature are frequent but not as highly valued as other methods of knowledge transfer. Consider what needs to be done to improve such trainings, such as:

- Having attendees bring one or two examples of difficult to code students based on real life. Discuss the scenarios as a group. Share materials (SEA, RRC, National) that are designed to assist the LEAs in classifying LRE scenarios.
- Assist LEAs in reviewing their year-to-year change reports (if available). Alternatively, have LEAs pull and analyze their data.
- Survey participant satisfaction with SEA trainings (and optionally, other methods of technical assistance). Based on responses, incorporate new methods and materials into trainings.
- Consider holding a focus group specifically for soliciting feedback on data trainings. Concentrate on how to improve all aspects of LRE training and technical assistance.

6. Consider target audience to announce trainings. (State)

The respondents for this study were predominantly local Special Education Directors—and their self-report data suggests they were not well informed about the existence of specific LRE technical assistance and trainings. Depending on communication policies, copy local directors on all e-mail and paper correspondence relative to LRE assists. Also at SEA conferences consider having a data support staff at a table for a day to share with interested local special education directors what data collections exist, what trainings exist, due dates, etc. Providing an attractive one page annual calendar of data events is particularly helpful to visual learners. Encourage local Special Education Directors to contact the SEA whenever a new local data support person is hired.

7. Develop LEA year-to-year change reports. (State, Regional)

Similar to Westat's use of SEA level data, SEAs should develop reports that present to the LEA both in graphic and tabular form the LRE changes within a district from one year to the next. Ideally, these can be viewed by the LEA while they are in the last stages of their current year submission process. LEAs with changes that exceed a designated level should be required to explain the changes to the SEA. (Occasionally, data system errors can account for substantial shifts in an LEA's data. Providing year-to-year change reports assists in providing an early alert to the LEA.) The Regional Resource Centers could assist one or more states that are not doing this by coordinating collaborative sharing within the region, and across regions, helping SEAs develop year-to-year report formats, and coordinating the development of LEA training materials for using the reports.

8. Develop student-level year-to-year change reports. (State, Regional)

States with individual student level collection capacity can design student specific reports to flag whenever an individual student moves two or more points on the LRE placement continuum from one year to the next. LEAs with such students could then be required to provide an explanation whenever a preset number and/or percent of such changes exist. Such data could also be useful for LEA monitoring. State assigned unique identifiers are required. The Regional Resource Center could assist states in the region to design such reports and LEA training materials.

9. ***Develop a pre-test for IDEA Data Managers. (State)*** An additional idea, not based on any specific aspect of this study, is to develop a pre-test for IDEA Data Managers. A pre-test would serve as an introduction to the complexity of issues surrounding LRE. It might encourage new (and experienced) IDEA Data Managers to access the resources and technical assistance available on LRE. A Regional Resource Center could also develop such a test for fostering regional discussions with state IDEA Data Managers.

Conclusion

This study began with the premise that LRE data are important; therefore accuracy (reliability) of LRE data is critical. Based on a small number of respondents, this study sheds doubt about the accuracy of LRE data within and across the northeastern states. However, there is no reason to believe that this group of states is any more or less different than any other group of states. It is our belief that many, possibly most, SEA IDEA Data Managers suspect inter-rater reliability problems in the collection of LRE data within their own state. Findings and recommendations from this study can be used to improve the accuracy of LRE data at classroom, district, state, region and national levels.

The study was conducted under the direction of the Northeast Regional Resource Center (NERRC) Director Kristin Reedy, Ed.D. Bruce Bull of Education Data Services and Information Systems (EDSIS) was the consultant and conducted the work.

Appendix A Northeast States LRE Data (Based on 2004 Data)

Students placed outside the regular classroom for less than 21% of the time: States in Region 1 demonstrate a range from a low of 44.23% in Massachusetts to a high of 76.54% in VT. Six out of eight states are above the U.S. average of 52.14%. This is an indication that the region is highly “inclusive” in terms of the numbers of students that receive the majority of their educational program in the regular classroom.

Special education outside regular class at least 21 percent of day and no more than 60 percent of the time: Region 1 states demonstrated a range from a low of 12.04% in NY to a high of 32.91% in Massachusetts.

Students placed outside the regular classroom for greater than 60% of the time: States in Region 1 demonstrate a range from a low of 3.32% in NH to a high of 27.32% in NY. Only two of the eight states exceed the U.S. average of 17.51% (NY and RI).

Students in separate facilities: For the 2000-2001 school year, the last year that state rank-ordered data were published by OSEP, states in Region 1 demonstrated a range from a low of 1.3% in ME to a high of 9.1% in NJ. Six of the eight states exceeded the U.S. average of 3.0%. Given the relatively high rates of placement in the regular classroom for the majority of the school day, it is interesting to note the high rates of placement in separate facilities demonstrated across the region. In fact, on OSEP’s rank ordered list of states (2000-01), six of the eight northeastern states fell within the bottom quarter of states in the U.S. For 2004, states in Region 1 demonstrate a range from a low of .10% in NH for **public separate facilities** to a high of 3.36% in NJ. Four out of eight states are above the U.S. average of 1.77% in this placement category. For private separate facilities, the range is from 1.76% in ME to 5.57% in NJ. All eight Region 1 states exceed the U.S. average of 1.20% for **private separate facilities**.

Table A-1. Percent of students ages 6 through 21 served under IDEA by educational environment and state

Percent of students in all environments										
2004 Data										
- Outside regular class -										
2004 Data				Public	Private	Public	Private	Home	All	
State	< 21%	21-60%	> 60%	separ	separ	resid	resid	hosp	envir	
	(%)	(%)	(%)	facil	facil	facil	facil	envir	envir	
				(%)	(%)	(%)	(%)	(%)	(%)	
Connecticut	60.67	22.88	10.30	1.62	2.84	0.11	1.42	0.16	100.00	
Maine	55.38	29.20	11.69	0.96	1.76	0.03	0.59	0.41	100.02	
Massachusetts	44.23	32.91	16.11	2.48	3.13	0.11	0.88	0.15	100.00	
New Hampshire	75.52	16.81	3.32	0.10	2.54	0.20	1.31	0.19	99.99	
New Jersey	45.88	27.85	16.65	3.36	5.57	0.16	0.10	0.44	100.01	
New York	53.64	12.04	27.32	2.85	2.46	0.38	0.84	0.47	100.00	
Rhode Island	62.76	13.84	18.70	.	3.09	.	0.88	0.50	99.77	
Vermont	76.54	7.88	8.74	1.95	3.30	0.09	1.20	0.31	100.01	

NE Mean	59.33	20.43	14.10	1.90	3.09	0.15	0.90	0.33
Standard Deviation	12.12	9.09	7.29	1.12	1.12	0.11	0.43	0.15

2005 Data									
State	Outside regular class			Public separ	Private separ	Public resid	Private resid	Home hosp	All
	< 21% (%)	21-60% (%)	> 60% (%)	facil (%)	facil (%)	facil (%)	facil (%)	envir (%)	envir (%)
Vermont	77.80	7.69	8.56	0.56	4.11	.	1.08	.	100.00
Rhode Island	64.30	12.94	18.27	.	3.11	.	0.83	0.31	100.00
New York	54.51	13.06	25.51	2.72	2.53	0.39	0.75	0.52	100.00
New Hampshire	76.26	16.17	3.23	0.07	2.64	0.17	1.31	0.16	100.00
Connecticut	65.21	20.40	7.66	1.78	3.32	0.09	1.37	0.17	100.00
New Jersey	46.05	27.95	16.68	3.16	5.44	0.15	0.08	0.50	100.00
Maine	57.11	28.19	11.17	0.83	1.75	0.04	0.53	0.38	100.00
Massachusetts	49.27	28.45	15.60	2.45	3.14	0.12	0.85	0.12	100.00
NE Mean	61.31	19.36	13.34	1.65	3.26	0.16	0.85	0.31	100.00
Standard Deviation	11.72	8.13	7.08	1.19	1.12	0.12	0.42	0.16	

**Appendix B
Advance Project Checklist for LRE Materials**

State: _____ Date: _____

LRE-Specific Material	Available to Review	Not Available	Not Sure	On Web?	Comment
1. Copies of Forms					
2. State Data Dictionary with LRE Definitions					
3. Online Help from State Data System(s)					
4. Face-to-Face Training Materials					
5. Training Videos / Online Flash					
6. FAQs Regarding LRE					
7. Other					
8. Other					
9. Other					
Initial Thoughts on Expanded Survey Option					
General Comments					

State Materials Form

Appendix C Process Form

A portion of this LRE study looks at processes that can affect the way LRE data are reported. Please answer each question and submit completed questionnaires at the end of today's lunch meeting. Thank you!

1. Briefly, describe your SEA's **internal** process to implement any annual OSEP changes to IDEA data requirements and/or definitions? (E.g., informal discussions, formal committee(s) review, IT submission process.)
2. If/when your SEA can not/will not abide by a new data requirement or definition (for the immediate future or long term), what internal SEA processes is there for making this decision?

For the remainder of the items please think specifically about LRE.

3. Does your state require LRE **definitions** on the IEP? If yes, to what degree do the LRE definitions exactly mirror OSEP definitions?
4. What **materials** does your SEA use to inform LEAs of updates to LRE definitions?
5. What **processes** does your SEA use to inform LEAs of updates to LRE definitions?
6. Indicate the feedback your SEA provides to LEAs relative to their **submitted** LRE data.
 - a) Are year-to-year changes in annual child count LRE data brought to the LEA's attention? If so, when?
 - b) Are LRE trend analyses **conducted by the SEA** and reported to the LEA?
 - c) Are LRE trend analyses **conducted by the LEA** that is monitored or reviewed by the SEA?
 - d) Are **student level** change reports provided back to the LEA by the SEA?
 - e) Does the state use a verification process (e.g., sampling of files) to check reported LRE data at the individual student level? If yes, describe.
 - f) Other?
7. How do **LEAs communicate** the definitions (old or updated) to those responsible for transmitting LRE data from the IEP to the SEA?
8. Finally, to what degree are the OSEP changes received by your SEA in time to make the necessary changes in the collection processes

Appendix D Generic Survey Instrument

Actual surveys were state specific and built in a program called SelectSurvey. Below is the text of all the questions that were asked of all states.

Introduction

This survey is designed to gather information on how the educational placement of students with disabilities is determined and reported to the State Education Agency (SEA). The Northeast Regional Resource Center (NERRC) received a grant from Westat to conduct a regional study of the special education placement patterns and processes in the northeastern states. This survey is part of that work. Your responses can remain anonymous—no names are requested. Your responses will be combined with those from other Local Education Agencies (LEAs) in your state and in the northeast region, to provide insight on the topic of placement.

Access to student records is not required for this survey, and the survey can be completed from any location with Internet access. This is NOT a state monitoring activity. It is NOT part of any LEA investigation. And it is NOT part of any child count data verification process. It is only a state affiliated activity in that SEA directors from all of the northeastern states supported NERRC in proposing and conducting this study.

Challenges interacting with the online survey process should be addressed to Bruce Bull. (503.589.9660 x 21, bruce.bull@edsis.org.) He is in the Pacific time zone and therefore 3 hours behind us. Questions regarding survey content or a specific item should be addressed to: _____ or _____@-_____

We truly appreciate your time (estimated survey response time 15-20 minutes) and input on this topic.

Demographics / Experience

1. Pick the one category that most accurately categorizes your current job: *
 - Special Ed Secretary/Administrative Assistant /Child Count Data Entry Clerk
 - IEP Team Chair / Special Ed Liaison
 - Special Education Teacher
 - Special Education Director or Director of Special Education
 - Other, please specify
2. How many YEARS have you been in the above position? (Round to nearest whole year.)* The value must be between 0 and 40, inclusive.
3. In general, what is your level of confidence in the accuracy of the data you are reporting to your SEA on the placement classifications of students with disabilities? *

1 (Low) 2 3 4 5 (High) Confidence

Technical Assistance and Training

We want to know about the availability and usefulness of different types of technical assistance (TA) and/or training you may have access to and/or received specifically on the topic of categorizing and reporting placement data to the SEA.

4. Were FACE-TO-FACE trainings/workshops available regarding placement data? * Yes No
5. In the last 24 months, did you engage in any FACE-TO-FACE trainings/workshops regarding placement data?* Yes No
6. How valuable to you was that FACE-TO-FACE training/workshop?*

1 (Low) 2 3 4 5 (High) Value

7. Were DISTANCE LEARNING trainings/workshops available regarding placement data? *
Yes No
8. In the last 24 months, did you engage in any DISTANCE LEARNING trainings/workshops regarding placement data?* Yes No
9. How valuable to you was that DISTANCE LEARNING training/workshop?*
1 (Low) 2 3 4 5 (High) Value
10. Were HANDS-ON computer trainings/workshops available regarding placement data? (These may have been in conjunction with face-to-face trainings or distance learning trainings.) * Yes No
11. In the last 24 months, did you engage in any HANDS-ON trainings/workshops regarding placement data?* Yes No
12. How valuable to you was that HANDS-ON training/workshop?* 1 (Low) 2 3 4 5 (High) Value
13. Was VIDEO of taped trainings (e.g., VHS, online) available regarding placement data? *
Yes No
14. In the last 24 months, did you view any VIDEO of taped trainings/workshops regarding placement data?* Yes No
15. How valuable to you was that VIDEO of trainings/workshops regarding placement data?*
1 (Low) 2 3 4 5 (High) Value
16. Was AUTOMATED HELP available from the data system or application (e.g., online help screens)? *
Yes No
17. In the last 24 months, did you engage any AUTOMATED HELPS from the data system or application? * Yes No
18. How valuable to you was that AUTOMATED HELP?* 1 (Low) 2 3 4 5 (High) Value
19. Was a DATA DICTIONARY available to you regarding placement data? * Yes No
20. In the last 24 months, did you access the DATA DICTIONARY regarding placement data?*
Yes No
21. How valuable to you was that DATA DICTIONARY?* 1 (Low) 2 3 4 5 (High) Value
22. Were DOCUMENTS such as memos, letters, process manuals, etc. (other than a Data Dictionary) available to help you address the topic of education placement? * Yes No
23. In the last 24 months, did you access any DOCUMENTS (other than a Data Dictionary) to assist you with placement data?* Yes No
24. How valuable to you were those DOCUMENTS (other than a Data Dictionary)?*
1 (Low) 2 3 4 5 (High) Value
25. Was a "state EXPERT" available to you via EMAIL to answer questions you had regarding education placement?* Yes No
26. In the last 24 months, did you engage a state "EXPERT" via EMAIL to assist you regarding placement data?* Yes No
27. How valuable to you was the EMAIL assistance from the state "EXPERT"?*

1 (Low) 2 3 4 5 (High) Value

28. Was a "state EXPERT" available to you via PHONE to answer questions you had regarding education placement?* Yes No

29. In the last 24 months, did you engage a state "EXPERT" via PHONE to assist you regarding placement data?* Yes No

30. How valuable to you was the PHONE assistance from the state "EXPERT"?*
1 (Low) 2 3 4 5 (High) Value

31. Were FAQs (frequently asked questions with answers) available to you regarding placement data? Yes No

32. In the last 24 months, did you access the FAQs regarding placement data?* Yes No

33. How valuable to you were these FAQs?* 1 (Low) 2 3 4 5 (High) Value

34. Was HELP FROM A COLLEAGUE available to you regarding placement data? * Yes No

35. In the last 24 months, did you access any HELP FROM A COLLEAGUE regarding placement data?* Yes No

36. How valuable to you was that HELP FROM A COLLEAGUE?* 1 (Low) 2 3 4 5 (High) Value

37. Please share any other types of TA you received or had available to you regarding understanding and reporting special education placement data. You may also provide additional comments on any of the above types of technical assistance if you wish.

38. When you have a student that is difficult to code, what process(es) do you use to determine the placement? *

- | | | | | | |
|--------------------------------|-------|--------|-----------|-------|--------|
| a) Take my best educated guess | Never | Rarely | Sometimes | Often | Always |
| b) Ask a colleague | Never | Rarely | Sometimes | Often | Always |
| c) Call someone at the state | Never | Rarely | Sometimes | Often | Always |
| d) Review TA materials | Never | Rarely | Sometimes | Often | Always |

39. What else would assist you in classifying special education placement determinations?

Scenarios

As you know, a student may receive education in multiple settings (e.g., regular class, self contained special education class, private residential school). At times, categorizing educational placement can be difficult. This survey is designed to get information on "difficult to code" school age students. Getting your honest and independent perspective will provide us insight into placement categorization.

Please read each school age scenario that follows and pick the best response base on the "[School Age Definitions](#)". (School age definitions are contained in the link.)

On some scenarios you may wish you had additional information to categorize more accurately. However, there is no additional information. As you may suspect, we have created some scenarios that are difficult to code. Also, this is not a "group exercise." Getting your independent perspective is important.

40. Steve's parents removed Steve, a 7th grader, from public school and placed him in a private prep school in their district. Later Steve is found eligible for special education. Steve now receives 2 hours a day of pull-out services in the resource room at the private school. *

- Sp Ed outside regular class less than 21% of day
- Sp Ed outside reg cl at least 21% not more than 60%
- Sp Ed outside regular class more than 60% of day
- Public separate school
- Private separate school
- Public residential facility
- Private residential facility
- Homebound/Hospital
- Don't know

41. Jamie goes to the local high school in the morning for 15 hours a week. While there Jamie receives 5 hours a week of special education in a co-taught program. (The co-taught classroom has one special education teacher and one general education teacher. The general education teacher is the teacher of record for this classroom.) In the afternoon Jamie goes to a work study program at the local McDonald's for a total of 15 hours a week.*

- Sp Ed outside regular class less than 21% of day
- Sp Ed outside reg cl at least 21% not more than 60%
- Sp Ed outside regular class more than 60% of day
- Public separate school
- Private separate school
- Public residential facility
- Private residential facility
- Homebound/Hospital
- Don't know

42. A district places Holly at a residential school for students with sensory impairments. Holly lives close to the school, so she takes the bus to and from school as a day student. Assume this is a public residential school.*

- Sp Ed outside regular class less than 21% of day
- Sp Ed outside reg cl at least 21% not more than 60%
- Sp Ed outside regular class more than 60% of day
- Public separate school
- Private separate school
- Public residential facility
- Private residential facility
- Homebound/Hospital
- Don't know

43. What is Holly's placement if the school is a private residential school?*

- Sp Ed outside regular class less than 21% of day
- Sp Ed outside reg cl at least 21% not more than 60%
- Sp Ed outside regular class more than 60% of day
- Public separate school
- Private separate school
- Public residential facility
- Private residential facility
- Homebound/Hospital
- Don't know

44. The district placed Pat at a private separate school for students on IEPs. Though still attending there part of the day, he is now transitioning back to his local high school. Currently his daily routine is to attend the private school from 9 - 12 then he is bussed to the public high school. In the afternoon he is in two general education classes with an instructional assistant who is responsible for Pat and another student

with disabilities. He also attends one special education life skills class at the public high school. Each high school class is an hour long.*

- _ Sp Ed outside regular class less than 21% of day
- _ Sp Ed outside reg cl at least 21% not more than 60%
- _ Sp Ed outside regular class more than 60% of day
- _ Public separate school
- _ Private separate school
- _ Public residential facility
- _ Private residential facility
- _ Homebound/Hospital
- _ Don't know

45. Jane is a parentally placed private school student with a Service Plan. During the first part of the year she received 1 hour of speech/week on a "pull-out" basis. The district decided to put her on an IEP in November but service levels and placement remain the same. *

- _ Sp Ed outside regular class less than 21% of day
- _ Sp Ed outside reg cl at least 21% not more than 60%
- _ Sp Ed outside regular class more than 60% of day
- _ Public separate school
- _ Private separate school
- _ Public residential facility
- _ Private residential facility
- _ Homebound/Hospital
- _ Don't know

46. Matt has two classes in community job experience, two general education content courses with special education support as needed, one class in a resource room with a special education teacher on study skills, and one elective class with no additional support. He has no other classes and the frequency and duration of all classes is the same. One of the community job experience classes is a general ed class, the other is a special education class. Also, in one general education class Matt is counted on enrollment by the special education teacher, in the other class the regular ed teacher counts him for attendance. *

- _ Sp Ed outside regular class less than 21% of day
- _ Sp Ed outside reg cl at least 21% not more than 60%
- _ Sp Ed outside regular class more than 60% of day
- _ Public separate school
- _ Private separate school
- _ Public residential facility
- _ Private residential facility
- _ Homebound/Hospital
- _ Don't know

Appendix E**Table E-1.** Summary results of availability, engagement, and value of different technical assistance and training methods

	CT	MA	ME	NH	NJ	NY	Sums	Score if yes
FACE-TO-FACE available	9 of 9	6 of 8	3 of 6	5 of 8	4 of 6	6 of 8	33	
FACE-TO-FACE engage	6 of 9	4 of 6	2 of 3	3 of 5	3 of 4	5 of 6	23	
FACE-TO-FACE value	4.50	3.75	3.00	3.00	4.00	3.80	88.00	3.83
DISTANCE LEARNING available	0 of 9	1 of 8	3 of 6	1 of 8	1 of 6	1 of 8	7	
DISTANCE LEARNING engage		0 of 1	1 of 3	0 if 1	1 of 1	0 of 1	2	
DISTANCE LEARNING value			1.00		5.00		6.00	3.00
HANDS ON available	2 of 9	4 of 8	2 of 6	4 of 8	2 of 6	2 of 8	16	
HANDS ON engage	1 of 2	3 of 4	2 of 2	3 of 4	2 of 2	1 of 2	12	
HANDS ON value	5.00	4.33	3.00	2.33	4.00	5.00	44.00	3.67
VIDEO available	2 of 9	2 of 8	1 of 6	0 of 8	0 of 6	0 of 8	5	
VIDEO engage	0 of 2	1 of 2	0 of 1				1	
VIDEO value		4.00					4.00	4.00
AUTOMATED HELP available	2 of 9	3 of 8	3 of 5	1 of 8	1 of 6	4 of 8	14	
AUTOMATED HELP engage	1 of 2	1 of 3	3 of 3	0 of 1	0 of 1	2 of 4	7	
AUTOMATED HELP value	4.00	4.00	3.33			3.00	24.00	3.43
DATA DICTIONARY available	2 of 9	1 of 8	0 of 4	4 of 8	2 of 6	4 of 8	13	
DATA DICTIONARY engage	1 of 2	1 of 1		1 of 4	0 of 2	2 of 4	5	
DATA DICTIONARY value	5.00	5.00		4.00		5.00	24.00	4.80
DOCUMENTS available	9 of 9	4 of 8	2 of 4	7 of 8	6 of 6	8 of 8	36	
DOCUMENTS engage	7 of 9	4 of 4	2 of 2	4 of 7	2 of 6	8 of 8	27	
DOCUMENTS value	4.29	4.00	3.50	3.00	3.50	4.00	104.00	3.85
EXPERT EMAIL available	9 of 9	5 of 8	3 of 4	7 of 8	5 of 6	5 of 8	34	
EXPERT EMAIL engage	8 of 9	4 of 5	3 of 3	5 of 7	3 of 5	3 of 5	26	
EXPERT EMAIL value	4.88	5.00	3.00	3.40	4.67	4.00	111.00	4.27
EXPERT PHONE available	9 of 9	5 of 8	3 of 4	7 of 8	6 of 6	7 of 8	37	
EXPERT PHONE engage	8 of 9	3 of 5	3 of 3	5 of 7	4 of 6	5 of 7	28	
EXPERT PHONE value	4.88		3.67	3.20	5.00	4.40	123.00	4.39
FAQ available	5 of 9	5 of 8	1 of 4	2 of 8	5 of 6	5 of 8	23	
FAQ engage	4 of 5	5 of 5	0 of 1	1 of 2	4 of 5	5 of 5	19	
FAQ value	4.00			4.00	3.75	4.00	76.00	4.00
COLLEAGUE available	9 of 9	5 of 8	2 of 4	7 of 8	6 of 6	7 of 8	36	
COLLEAGUE engage	8 of 9	3 of 5	2 of 2	7 of 7	4 of 6	6 of 7	30	
COLLEAGUE value	3.88	4.33	4.00	4.29	4.75	4.50	128.00	4.27
# consistent / possible	6 / 11	2 / 11	5 / 11	7 / 11	8 / 11	5 / 11		33 / 66

= Consistent

**Appendix F
State School Age LRE Definitions**

Rhode Island

(Information secured from IEP document linked from RI DOE.)

31) SPECIAL EDUCATION AND RELATED SERVICES									
32) GOAL #	33) PROVIDERS/ SERVICES	34) LOCATION/ PLACEMENT		35) FREQUENCY/ DURATION			36) DATE		37) EXPLANATION FOR PLACEMENT OUTSIDE OF GENERAL EDUCATION SETTING
		REG ED	OTHER	HRS/ DAY	DAYS /WK	WK/ MO	FROM	TO	
38) DETERMINATION OF TIME IN REGULAR EDUCATION PROGRAM									
a) _____ Total time in student's school week									
b) _____ Total time of Special Education Support/Services (33)									
c) _____ Time in regular education without Special Education Support/Services									
39) EXTENT OF PARTICIPATION IN REGULAR EDUCATION: This student will participate in regular grade level program (for middle/junior high school/high school, attach schedule) except									

Vermont

(Information secured from state IEP form as Vermont was not involved with survey. Information is reformatted here.)

The general characteristics of the student/child's placement (check one, ages 6-21):
<u>Inside regular class at least 80% of the time</u>
<u>Inside regular class 40% to 79% of the time</u>
<u>Inside regular class less than 40% of the time</u>
<u>Separate day school – public or private</u>
<u>Residential facility</u>
<u>Homebound/Hospital</u>

New Jersey Educational Environments of Children with Disabilities Ages 6-21 (NJ)

To calculate the percentage of time inside the regular classroom, divide the number of hours the youth receives special education and related services inside the regular classroom by the *total number of hours in the school day* (including lunch, recess and study periods).

Home-schooled students who receive special education and related services provided by the local educational agency should be counted in the first three listed placements below. For these students, the number of hours outside the regular classroom is the number of hours the youth spends in separate special education environments (e.g. resource rooms, self-contained special education classrooms, separate schools).

Educational time spent in age-appropriate community-based settings that include individuals with and without disabilities, such as college campuses or vocational sites, should be counted as time spent with non-disabled peers.

Students with disabilities who are included in the general education setting at least 80% of the school day. This may include children with disabilities placed in:

- regular class with special education/related services provided within regular classes;
- regular class with special education/related services provided outside regular classes; or
- regular class with special education services provided in resource rooms.

Students with disabilities in the presence of general education students between 40% and 80% of the entire school day. Students with disabilities who are included in the general education setting from 40% to 79% of the school day. Includes children with disabilities receiving special education and related services inside the regular classroom for at least 40% but no more than 79% of the school day. No more than 60% of their special education and related services are provided outside the general education classroom. Do not include children who are reported as receiving education programs in public or private separate school or residential facilities. This may include children placed in:

- resource rooms with special education/related services provided within the resource room; or
- resource rooms with part-time instruction in a regular class.

Students with disabilities who are included in the general education setting up to 39% of the school day. At least 61% of their special education and related services are provided outside the general education classroom. Includes children with disabilities receiving special education and related services inside the regular classroom for less than 40 percent of the school day. Do not include children who are reported as receiving education programs in public or private separate school or residential facilities. This category may include children placed in:

- self-contained special classrooms with part-time instruction in a regular class; or
- self-contained special classrooms with full-time special education instruction on a regular school campus.

Public separate school. Students with disabilities who receive education programs in public separate day school facilities. This includes children with disabilities receiving special education and related services for greater than 50 percent of the school day in public separate schools. This may include children placed in:

- public day schools for students with disabilities;
- public day schools for students with disabilities for a portion of the school day (greater than 50 percent) and in regular school buildings for the remainder of the school day; or
- public residential facilities if the student does not live at the facility.

Private separate school. Students with disabilities who receive education programs in private separate day school facilities. This includes children with disabilities receiving special education and related services, at public expense, for greater than 50 percent of the school day in private separate schools. This may include children placed in:

- private day schools for students with disabilities;
- private day schools for students with disabilities for a portion of the school day (greater than 50 percent) and in regular school buildings for the remainder of the school day; or
- private residential facilities if the student does not live at the facility.

Public residential facility. Students with disabilities who receive education programs and live in public residential facilities during the school week. This includes children with disabilities receiving special education and related services for greater than 50 percent of the school day in public residential facilities. This may include children placed in:

- public residential schools for students with disabilities; or
- public residential schools for students with disabilities for a portion of the school day (greater than 50 percent) and in separate day schools or regular school buildings for the remainder of the school day.

Do not include students who received education programs at the facility, but do not live there.

Private residential facility. Students with disabilities who receive education programs and live in private residential facilities during the school week. This includes children with disabilities receiving special education and related services, at public expense, for greater than 50 percent of the school day in private residential facilities. This may include children placed in:

- private residential schools for students with disabilities; or
- private residential schools for students with disabilities for a portion of the school day (greater than 50 percent) and in separate day schools or regular school buildings for the remainder of the school day.

Do not include students who received education programs at the facility, but do not live there.

Homebound/Hospital. Students with disabilities who receive education programs in homebound/hospital environment includes children with disabilities placed in and receiving special education and related services in:

- hospital programs, or
- homebound programs.

Do not include children with disabilities whose parents have opted to home-school them and who receive special education at the public expense.

Massachusetts

DOE034 Educational Environment
<p>3-5 Year Olds ONLY: 08-100% services in general education classroom 09-100% services in separate classroom</p> <p><i>ALL AGES:</i> 10-Full Inclusion, less than 21% outside general education 20- Partial Inclusion, 21%-60% outside general education 40- Substantially Separate, outside general education more than 60% 41-Public Separate Day 50-Private Separate Day 60-Residential School 70-Homebound/Hospital (Not home schooled) 90-Public Residential Facility</p>

New Hampshire, New York, Connecticut, Maine

Educational Environments of Children with Disabilities Ages 6-21

NY To calculate the percentage of time outside the regular classroom, divide the number of hours the youth receives special education and related services outside the regular classroom by the *total number of hours in the school day* (including lunch, recess and study periods).

ME Home-schooled students who receive special education and related services provided by the local educational agency should be counted in the first three listed placements below. For these students, the number of hours outside the regular classroom is the number of hours the youth spends in separate special education environments (e.g. resource rooms, self-contained special education classrooms, separate schools).

ME Educational time spent in age-appropriate community-based settings that include individuals with and without disabilities, such as college campuses or vocational sites, should be counted as time spent with non-disabled peers.

Special education outside regular class less than 21 percent of day. *Unduplicated* number of children with disabilities receiving special education and related services outside the regular classroom for less than 21 percent of the school day. This may include children with disabilities placed in:

- regular class with special education/related services provided within regular classes;
- regular class with special education/related services provided outside regular classes; or
- regular class with special education services provided in resource rooms.

Special education outside regular class at least 21 percent of day and no more than 60 percent of day. *Unduplicated* total includes children with disabilities receiving special education and related services outside the regular classroom for at least 21 percent but no more than 60 percent of the school day. Do not include children who are reported as receiving education programs in public or private separate school or residential facilities. This may include children placed in:

- resource rooms with special education/related services provided within the resource room; or
- resource rooms with part-time instruction in a regular class.

Special education outside regular class more than 60 percent of day. *Unduplicated* total includes children with disabilities receiving special education and related services outside the regular classroom for more than 60 percent of the school day. Do not include children who are reported as receiving education programs in public or private separate school or residential facilities. This category may include children placed in:

- self-contained special classrooms with part-time instruction in a regular class; or
- self-contained special classrooms with full-time special education instruction on a regular school campus.

Public separate school. *Unduplicated* total who received education programs in public separate day school facilities. This includes children with disabilities receiving special education and related services for greater than 50 percent of the school day in public separate schools. This may include children placed in:

- public day schools for students with disabilities;
- public day schools for students with disabilities for a portion of the school day (greater than 50 percent) and in regular school buildings for the remainder of the school day; or
- public residential facilities if the student does not live at the facility.

Private separate school. *Unduplicated* total who received education programs in private separate day school facilities. This includes children with disabilities receiving special education and related services,

at public expense, for greater than 50 percent of the school day in private separate schools. This may include children placed in:

- private day schools for students with disabilities;
- private day schools for students with disabilities for a portion of the school day (greater than 50 percent) and in regular school buildings for the remainder of the school day; or
- private residential facilities if the student does not live at the facility.

Public residential facility. *Unduplicated* total who received education programs and lived in public residential facilities during the school week. This includes children with disabilities receiving special education and related services for greater than 50 percent of the school day in public residential facilities. This may include children placed in:

- public residential schools for students with disabilities; or
- public residential schools for students with disabilities for a portion of the school day (greater than 50 percent) and in separate day schools or regular school buildings for the remainder of the school day.

Do not include students who received education programs at the facility, but do not live there.

Private residential facility. *Unduplicated* total who received education programs and lived in private residential facilities during the school week. This includes children with disabilities receiving special education and related services, at public expense, for greater than 50 percent of the school day in private residential facilities. This may include children placed in:

- private residential schools for students with disabilities; or
- private residential schools for students with disabilities for a portion of the school day (greater than 50 percent) and in separate day schools or regular school buildings for the remainder of the school day.

Do not include students who received education programs at the facility, but do not live there.

Homebound/Hospital. *Unduplicated* total who received education programs in homebound/hospital environment includes children with disabilities placed in and receiving special education and related services in:

- hospital programs, or
- homebound programs.

Do not include children with disabilities whose parents have opted to home-school them and who receive special education at the public expense.

Appendix G Aggregate and State Level Consensus on Coding LRE for School Age Scenarios

How to read this table:

The table below provides the scenarios followed by a heading row with headings for aggregate data (AG1 and AG2) and state data (e.g., CT1 and CT2). AG1 and AG2 are the first and second most common responses (modes) for that scenario across all respondents from all states. State data headings indicate the first and second modes for that scenario within that state. Note that secondary state modes (e.g., CT2, ME2, MA2) are only shown when the number of respondents is greater than or equal to 2. Below the aggregate and state headings, below each scenario, are the abbreviations as shown in **Table 5** that denote the LRE modal responses. These are shown both in aggregate and by state. The number of state respondents that selected each modal response is in the *n* row. Below the *n* is the ratio of state respondents selecting the modal response to the total number of useable respondent answers from that state for that scenario. In other words, the number of state respondents that chose this classification over the number of total state respondents for this scenario. The ratio can be seen as a measure of agreement within a state. (Note that some respondents categorized some scenarios as “don’t now” or provided no answer and are excluded from that scenario’s ratio.) Pink cells denote disagreement between the state score and aggregate score. Finally, when a state had the same number of respondents for both state scores 1 and 2 (bimodal) the number or responses are shown in bold italicized red text in the *n* row.

Table G-1. Aggregate and State level coding consensus for LRE school age scenarios													
1) Steve’s parents removed Steve, a 7th grader, from public school and placed him in a private prep school in their district. Later Steve is found eligible for special education. Steve now receives 2 hours a day of pull-out services in the resource room at the private school.													
AG1	AG2	CT1	CT2	ME1	ME2	MA1	MA2	NH1	NH2	NJ1	NJ2	NY1	NY2
PrS	21-60	PrS	< 21	PrS		PrS		PrS	21-60	21-60	PrS	21-60	
<i>n</i>		4	4	3		4		5	2	2	2	7	
Ratio		4:9	4:9	3:4		4:8		5:8	2:8	2:6	2:6	7:8	
2) Jamie goes to the local high school in the morning for 15 hours a week. While there Jamie receives 5 hours a week of special education in a co-taught program. (The co-taught classroom has one special education teacher and one general education teacher. The general education teacher is the teacher of record for this classroom.) In the afternoon Jamie goes to a work study program at the local McDonald’s for a total of 15 hours a week.													
AG1	AG2	CT1	CT2	ME1	ME2	MA1	MA2	NH1	NH2	NJ1	NJ2	NY1	NY2
< 21	21-60	< 21		< 21		< 21		21-60	< 21	< 21		< 21	
<i>n</i>		7		2		6		3	2	5		8	
Ratio		7:9		2:4		6:8		3:6	2:6	5:6		8:8	
3) A district places Holly at a residential school for students with sensory impairments. Holly lives close to the school, so she takes the bus to and from school as a day student. Assume this is a public residential school.													
AG1	AG2	CT1	CT2	ME1	ME2	MA1	MA2	NH1	NH2	NJ1	NJ2	NY1	NY2
PuS	PuR	PuS	PuR	PuS		PuS		PuS	PuR	PuS	PuR	PuS	
<i>n</i>		7	2	3		6		5	3	4	2	4	

Ratio		7:9	2:9	3:4		6:7		5:8	3:8	4:6	2:6	7:8	
4) What is Holly's placement if the school is a private residential school?													
AG1	AG2	CT1	CT2	ME1	ME2	MA1	MA2	NH1	NH2	NJ1	NJ2	NY1	NY2
PrS	PrR	PrS	PrR	PrS		PrS	PuR	PrS	PrR	PrS	PuR	PrS	
<i>n</i>		4	2	3		5	3	4	4	4	2	8	
Ratio		4:9	2:9	3:4		5:8	3:8	4:8	4:8	4:6	2:6	8:8	
5) The district placed Pat at a private separate school for students on IEPs. Though still attending there part of the day, he is now transitioning back to his local high school. Currently his daily routine is to attend the private school from 9 - 12 then he is bussed to the public high school. In the afternoon he is in two general education classes with an instructional assistant who is responsible for Pat and another student with disabilities. He also attends one special education life skills class at the public high school. Each high school class is an hour long													
AG1	AG2	CT1	CT2	ME1	ME2	MA1	MA2	NH1	NH2	NJ1	NJ2	NY1	NY2
> 60	PrS	> 60	21-60	> 60		PrS	> 60	> 60		> 60		> 60	
<i>n</i>		6	2	3		4	2	5		5		5	
Ratio		6:8	2:8	3:4		4:8	2:8	5:7		5:6		5:7	
6) Jane is a parentally placed private school student with a Service Plan. During the first part of the year she received 1 hour of speech/week on a "pull-out" basis. The district decided to put her on an IEP in November but service levels and placement remain the same.													
AG1	AG2	CT1	CT2	ME1	ME2	MA1	MA2	NH1	NH2	NJ1	NJ2	NY1	NY2
< 21	PrS	< 21	PrS	< 21		< 21	PrS	PrS		na	Na	< 21	
<i>n</i>		5	3	3		4	3	7		na	Na	8	
Ratio		5:8	3:8	3:4		4:7	3:7	7:8		Skipped		8:8	
7) Matt has two periods in community job experience, two general education content courses with special education support as needed, one class in a resource room with a special education teacher on study skills, and one general education elective class (without special ed support). He has no other classes and the frequency and duration of all classes is the same.													
AG1	AG2	CT1	CT2	ME1	ME2	MA1	MA2	NH1	NH2	NJ1	NJ2	NY1	NY2
< 21	21-60	< 21	21-60	21-60		21-60		< 21	21-60	< 21		< 21	21-60
<i>n</i>		3	3	3		5		4	4	5		5	3
Ratio		3:7	3:7	3:4		5:7		4:8	4:8	5:6		5:8	3:8