Admission, Review, and Dismissal (ARD) Committee Meeting Essentials for Parents

Virtual Workshop
September 29, 2020
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This presentation is provided by the Child Find, Evaluation, and ARD Supports Network

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The handout for this virtual workshop can be accessed at
https://esc4.box.com/v/Handouts-ARDEssentials4Parents
Helpful Resource

Parent’s Guide to the Admission, Review and Dismissal Process
July 2020

Guía Para Padres del Proceso de Admisión, Repaso, y Retiro
Julio 2020
Workshop Topics Overview

✓ Duties of the ARD Committee
✓ Who Must Attend the ARD Meeting
✓ Meeting Notices and Parent or Guardian Requests
✓ Participation Options and Tips
✓ What’s in an Individualized Education Program (IEP)
✓ What to Do if You Disagree
✓ Tips to Advocate for Your Child
✓ Links to Resources
Duties of the ARD Committee
The ARD Committee

Following an initial evaluation, the ARD committee is the team that meets to:

- Determine whether your child meets eligibility requirements.
- Develop an IEP for him or her, if appropriate.
- Determine what special education and related services are needed.
The ARD committee meets at least once a year to:

• Review your child’s current IEP and discuss your child’s progress

• Develop a new IEP for the upcoming year
The ARD committee must also meet to review and revise the IEP as needed to address:

- A lack of progress toward your child’s annual IEP goals or in the general education curriculum;
- The results of any reevaluation;
- Information about your child provided to, or by, the parent/guardian as part of a review of existing evaluation data (REED);
- Your child’s anticipated needs; or
- Other matters, such as transition services
Amendment Without a Meeting

Changes to an IEP may be made by amending the IEP if:

• You and the school agree not to hold an ARD committee meeting to make the changes; and

• The school develops a written document to change your child's current IEP.
Amendment Without a Meeting

• If the IEP is amended without an ARD committee meeting, the ARD committee members, including you, must be informed of those changes.

• A copy of the revised IEP must be provided to you if you ask for it.
An amendment cannot be conducted for:

- eligibility determinations,
- changes of placement, and
- manifestation determination reviews (MDRs).

An ARD committee meeting must be conducted for these situations.
Who Must Attend the ARD Committee Meeting?
Required ARD Committee Members

- Parent/Guardian
- Regular Education Teacher
- Special Education Teacher
- Representative of the School District

- Individual Who Can Interpret the Instructional Implications of Evaluation Results
- Other individuals who have knowledge or special expertise regarding the child
- Student With a Disability*
Additional ARD Committee Members

Representative of Any Participating Agency Likely to Be Responsible for Providing or Paying for Transition Services

Career and Technical Education (CTE) Representative

Language Proficiency Assessment Committee (LPAC) Member

Other Teachers:
- Teacher of students with visual impairments
- Teacher of students who are deaf or hard of hearing

Other Personnel:
- Juvenile Justice Alternative Education Program (JJAEP) Administrator
- Early Childhood Intervention (ECI) Service Coordinator
Meeting Notice and Parent or Guardian Requests
The ARD committee meeting must be at a **time and place** that you and school can agree upon.

Parent(s) or guardians should receive written notice of the meeting **at least 5 school days** before the meeting, unless you agree to a shorter timeframe.

Meeting notice should be in **your native language** and include:

- Meeting purpose
- Place and time of the meeting
- List of the people attending
Notice of the ARD Committee Meeting

• Be sure to **promptly reply** to the meeting notice

• If you cannot attend, you can **ask the district to reschedule** the meeting to another date/time that will work for both you and the school
  • You may want to give the school some alternate dates and times when you **can** attend.
Be sure to:

- Confirm that your child’s school has your correct mailing address, phone number(s), and email address.
- Update your contact information if changes are needed.
- Let the school know if you need an interpreter, oral translation, or anything else to help you participate.
Written Request for an ARD Meeting

Schedule and hold the meeting

Provide Prior Written Notice Explaining Why the School Refuses to Schedule a Meeting
Options for Participation

- Face-to-Face
- Virtual
- Phone

- Ask to Reschedule
- Allow School to Proceed
Tips for Parent/Guardian Participation

1. Request a draft of the IEP prior to the meeting so that you may review proposed goals and services.
2. Write down all questions, concerns, or suggestions that you have prior to the meeting.
3. Bring ideas to the table during the meeting. Remember you are your child’s voice.
Preparing for a Virtual ARD Meeting

- Ask about the technology platform being used and requirements for using it successfully.
- Share any technology concerns or potential barriers you may have about participating in the meeting virtually and confirm participation.
- Create your back-up plan (e.g., print documents or ask for print copies, charge your phone, have call-in number readily available).

“Virtual IEP Meeting Tip Sheets” - U.S. Department of Education, Office of Special Education Programs
Preparing for a Virtual ARD Meeting

- Ask for an agenda and meeting norms. For example, use video if possible, keep the focus on your child, and mute the microphone when not speaking.
- Remove distractions and minimize background noise as much as possible.
- Request interpreters or other supports if needed.

“Virtual IEP Meeting Tip Sheets” - U.S. Department of Education, Office of Special Education Programs
Participating in a Virtual ARD Meeting

Be patient – technology may not work as intended. Assume everyone is doing their best.

Listen closely and wait to share your thoughts and ideas until the current speaker finishes.

Introduce yourself before speaking and use video if possible.
Participating in a Virtual ARD Meeting

Stop frequently and provide participants enough time to ask and respond to questions and feedback.

Discuss and agree on the processes for obtaining forms or signatures, if necessary.

Confirm the method for receiving a copy of the completed IEP document (e.g., mail, email) and the anticipated arrival date.
What is in an Individualized Education Program (IEP)?
What’s in an IEP?

- Present levels of academic achievement and functional performance (PLAAFP)
- Annual goals
- Description of special education and related services + supplementary aids and services
- Participation in state and districtwide assessments
- Other areas, including transition services when age-appropriate
Present levels of academic achievement and functional performance (PLAAFP)

- Current functioning and progress
- Academic & functional
- Share any information or data
Annual Goals

- Developed to meet your child’s needs
- Measurable
- Progress is monitored
Services: Special Education, Related, & Supplementary

Special education and related services + supplementary aids and services

- Services needed to:
  - Enable child to advance toward annual goals
  - Be involved and make progress in general curriculum
  - Be educated and participate with students without disabilities

- When/Where/How of services, supports, and modifications
State & District-wide Assessment

Participation in state and district-wide assessments

- State assessments
  - STAAR
  - STAAR Alternate 2
  - TELPAS
  - TELPAS Alternate

- District-wide assessments
Transition

- Coordination of actions to assist moving from school to post-school activities
- Prior to turning 14 or earlier
Special Factors: Assistive Technology

- Must be considered by ARD committee
- A formal AT evaluation may not be required
- AT must provide meaningful educational benefit to student
Additional Special Factors

- Behavior
- Language
- Transportation
- Communication
- Supplements
  - Autism
  - DHH/VI
Placement

Least Restrictive Environment (LRE)

- Maximum extent appropriate with children without disabilities
- Continuum of placement options
Extended School Year (ESY)

- Beyond the regular school year
- Critical areas indicate severe or substantial regression
- IEP goals identified
Closure

- Minutes
- Prior Written Notice
- Mutual agreement
Prior Written Notice

5 School Days

What, When, Where, Who

Native Language

Proposes to initiate or change

Refuses to initiate or change

Prior Written Notice
Mutual Agreement

All members of the ARD committee should agree on the decisions made (or come to consensus), if possible.

- The school has the ultimate responsibility to ensure that the IEP includes the services your child needs in order to receive a free and appropriate public education (FAPE).
- The IEP must indicate whether you and the administrator agree or disagree with the decisions of the ARD committee.
If the committee still does not agree at the second meeting, the school must implement your child’s IEP it has determined appropriate, and the parent/guardian must be offered the opportunity to write a statement of disagreement.
Copy of IEP

- Provided at no cost
- Delivered as soon as possible
- Translation provided
- Additional copy upon request
Tips for Advocating for Your Child
Tips for Advocating for Your Child

- Know it’s OK to speak up
- Start by speaking with someone you trust
- Ask as many questions as you need
- Show emotion – but be respectful
- Educate in order to advocate
- Ask about extra help, supports, and interventions
- Write down your thoughts and concerns

“8 Steps to Advocating for Your Child at School” A. Morin. Understood.org.
Resources

Special Education Information Center (SPEDTex)
www.spedtexas.org

Partners Resource Network-Texas
www.prnptexas.org

Child Find, Evaluation, and ARD Supports Network
www.childfindtx.tea.texas.gov
Thank you for joining us!

Questions? Comments? Please email childfindtx@esc4.net