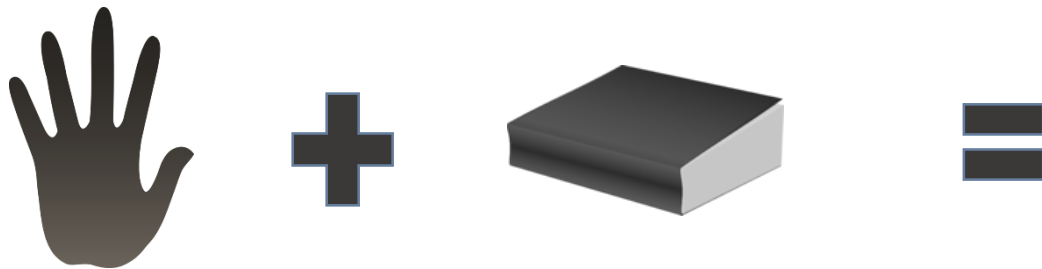


ARD Handbook for Teachers



A brief bit of information to help define your role and expectations.

IEPs & ARDs

Special Education law requires an IEP (Individual Education Plan) for any student who receives services. The IEP is what drives the placement. In other words, the ARD doesn't decide placement then write the IEP to fit the placement. Instead, student data and competencies are used to draft IEPs, those are presented as drafts at the ARD, tweaked if needed (including parent input), accepted, and then placement is decided based upon student need.

So...for an initial ARD (one where the student is coming into special education for the first time), an IEP is drafted *after* the testing is completed by the evaluation staff at your campus. It helps to send a copy of the draft home to the parents prior to the ARD so that you don't have to spend so much time on each item. It is important that parents understand that the IEP is presented as a draft and that they will have an opportunity to provide input.

Once the IEP goals and objectives are accepted at the ARD modifications will be discussed and then placement is decided. Give careful thought to the modifications checked.

- If you are doing something that is done for every other student, then it is standard procedure, **not a special modification**.
- If it is something that may apply only to the individual student then it check it.
- Be sure that it is necessary for the student to make progress and something the teacher(s) will be able to implement.

What do I bring to the ARD?

Initial ARD –

- A copy of the draft IEP.

Annual ARD (done once a year) –

- One copy of the newly drafted IEP. The IEP will be what drives the student's placement for the next 12 months. Therefore, it needs to be based on data – not what sounds like a good idea.
{You need goals and objectives for academic areas and behavior (if these are a concern)}

If possible, prepare a draft of the accommodations page ahead of time. The ARD facilitator, Diagnostician, and/or LSSP do not know the student as well as you do, so it makes sense for you to put some thought into what is necessary for the student to be successful. The Assistive Technology Assessment of Needs should also be drafted (if appropriate).

It is also helpful to have any STAAR scores available as well as current grades for the student. This information helps the ARD committee make informed decisions about the student and what services may apply.

ARD Agenda

(or Why do we have to talk about that now?)

There are certain things that must be discussed before placement can be decided. For that reason, the person who is running the ARD will have an ARD Agenda. The following is a brief explanation of what should be happening:

- Eligibility – a student has to be eligible to receive services. Determining eligibility will be the first step in an ARD. If there are new assessments, they will be reviewed in this step of the process.

- Present Competencies (PLAAFP) – this is where the teacher comes in. What can a student do? Do you have data to support this information?
i.e. reading level, difficulties in problem solving, strengths, weaknesses (with the emphasis on strengths because the assessment report will deal with weaknesses)
- Old IEPs – progress is reported here. This is where a review of the updated IEPs takes place. (If this is an initial placement you will skip this step.)
- New IEPs – draft of proposed IEPs are presented for review, discussion, amendment, and acceptance. You cannot discuss placement and services without first accepting IEPs.
- Accommodations/Modifications – What will it take to make the student successful? This page of the ARD will also deal with STAAR and other standardized testing.
- LRE – (Least Restrictive Environment) – What has been provided, tried, or considered? and with what amount of success? You should know that the mandate is for general education to be the first consideration when determining where a student receives services. This is also where the committee justifies removing the student from the general education setting if appropriate – based on IEPs, Accommodations, and Modifications.
- Services – now...finally, it's time to discuss what services the child needs and where they can be implemented most effectively. This will include the amount of time and place. This is also where related services are discussed if appropriate. (By law- related services are those services necessary for a student to benefit from *special education services*.)

A student does not have to be receiving pull out services to receive related services. If in doubt, ask the assessment person, ARD facilitator, or special education central office contact for more information.

Do I have to stay for the entire ARD?

A special education teacher and a general education teacher are required members of a duly constituted ARD committee. If the ARD procedure is followed, then placement is the last thing discussed. It would be unethical (and illegal) for a teacher to sign and check the agree slot if that teacher is not present for the discussion regarding IEPs, accommodations/modifications, and placement. It is not, however, necessary for all teachers to stay the entire time. The ARD committee should designate one general education teacher and one special education teacher as the consensus members, and those are the individuals who must be present for the entire ARD.

It is possible for a teacher to serve in two capacities in an ARD. For instance, a speech therapist may be both the assessment person and the special education teacher. A general education teacher may also be the LPAC representative. In such cases, the teacher must sign on both lines but agrees or disagrees only once.

Tips for Speeding up the ARD

1. Send a copy of the draft IEP home prior to the ARD
2. Arrive at the ARD meeting on time
3. Bring all necessary documents with you (progress reports, common assessments, report cards, attendance, teacher feedback, etc.)
4. Keep the discussion relevant to the ARD – this is not a parent/teacher conference. Save discussions not relevant to the ARD for phone calls or parent conferences. (i.e. descriptions of how you teach a specific lesson or what needs to be included in the book report due next week may need to be discussed, but it is **not** relevant to the ARD)
5. Let the assessment person/ARD facilitator know ahead of time if you anticipate any problems or conflicts

We had the ARD. Now what happens?

Someone at the ARD must be designated to distribute IEPs, Accommodations/Modifications, and BIPs (if applicable) to any teachers who work with the student. The IEP must relate to the subject taught (i.e. the math teacher does not need the reading IEP), therefore the IEPs will be distributed to the teachers who will be implementing them. The BIP would be distributed to all of the student's teachers, administrators, and applicable personnel (this could also include the cafeteria monitors, and/or bus driver).

Remember, the IEP is not something to be filed away and pulled out just before the ARD. It is a working document and describes what the student must be taught during the year. This is very useful when it is time for the progress report to go home.

Speaking of progress reports...

The progress report is not the typical interim progress report that students receive if they are failing a class or not doing well. Rather, it is an update of the student's progress on his/her IEP (including the BIP), and must be sent home whenever report cards are sent home. Some teachers choose to update the IEP, copy the entire document, and send that home. eSped has a much shorter and neater method. Ask for help in generating the progress report if necessary. Once you get the hang of it, you will appreciate it and the amount of paper and copies it will save. (By the way, you will still have to update the IEP). You won't, however, have to copy and send multiple pages. You can email progress reports to parents or send home with regular report cards.

Some important things to remember:

The ARD does not –

- specify methodology
- specify personnel
- facilitate in-district transfers

Things you should NOT say in the ARD meeting –

- “We don't have that program.”
- “My supervisor said...”
- “That program is not for children with {*this label*}”
- “You have to be in resource to get...”
- “We don't have the authority to make that decision.”
- “I don't work with students with {*type of disability*}.”
- “What do you want me/us to do?”
- “I cannot find time in my schedule to work with your child.”
- “We don't...”
- “When are you going to put your child on medication?”
- “I cannot handle your child's behavior in my class.”
- “No, I have not had time to review your child's ARD, but I *think* he/she can do...”
- “I only work in regular classes.”
- “Billy, one of my students, has problems getting along with your child.”

- “Billy has some serious learning problems like your child.”

Teacher's ARD Checklist

- PLAAFP updated in eSped
- New IEP draft(s)
- Work samples (or other data sources)
- Brigance testing (if available)
- STAAR scores
- Most recent progress report
- Communication Log
- Schedule of Services in eSped