UVALDE CISD



Special Education Handbook

This is a living document and may be revised as needed to reflect updates to Texas Education Agency (TEA) guidance, Texas Association of School Boards (TASB) policy recommendations, applicable law, and Uvalde CISD procedures.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

Table of Contents

TABLE OF CONTENTS 2
SCHOOL YEAR TIMELINES 4
COORDINATION OF REGULAR AND SPECIAL EDUCATION 5
SPECIAL EDUCATION SERVICE LOG 6
INTERSECTION OF 504 AND SPECIAL EDUCATION 6
CONTINUUM OF SPECIAL EDUCATION SERVICES DOCUMENTATION & GUIDANCE 7
INCLUSION/RESOURCE 8
CHOICES ATTITUDES RESPONSIBILITY EXPECTATIONS (CARE) 9
FUNCTIONAL LIFE SKILLS (FLS) 9
PERSONAL CARE SERVICES 10
MEDICAID/SHARS 11
COORDINATION WITH OUTSIDE SERVICE PROVIDERS 12
RECORDS, CONFIDENTIALITY, AND DOCUMENTATION 12
SCHEDULING AND STUDENT LIST OF ANNUAL ARDS 14
PARAPROFESSIONALS 14
SUPERVISION OF PARAPROFESSIONALS 17
TEACHER AND PARAPROFESSIONAL SCHEDULES 18
EARLY CHILDHOOD SPECIAL EDUCATION (ECSE) 19
PROGRESS REPORTS 20
TRANSITION CONSIDERATIONS 20
ADULT TRANSITION SERVICES (18+) 24
SUMMARY OF PERFORMANCE 25
EXTENDED SCHOOL YEAR 25
STATE AND/OR DISTRICT-WIDE ASSESSMENT 27
ACCELERATED INSTRUCTION (AI)/ 28
INTENSIVE PROGRAM OF INSTRUCTION (IPI) 28
CHILD FIND/REFERRAL 30
DYSLEXIA 32
IEP DEVELOPMENT - INITIAL ARDS AND SUBSEQUENT ANNUAL REVIEWS 32
WHEN TO SCHEDULE ARD MEETINGS 33

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PRESENT LEVELS OF ACADEMIC ACHIEVEMENT AND FUNCTIONAL PERFORMANCE 39
(PLAAFP) 39
ARD COMMITTEE ATTENDANCE 40
ADMISSION, REVIEW, AND DISMISSAL COMMITTEE MEETING AGENDA 42
IEP AMENDMENTS AND REVISION ARDs 43
AUTISM SUPPLEMENT 44
DISCIPLINE 46
DISTRICT ALTERNATIVE EDUCATION PLACEMENT (DAEP) AND EXPULSION GUIDELINES 48
GUIDELINES FOR WRITING A BEHAVIOR INTERVENTION PLAN 49
TIME-OUT 50
Aversive Techniques 51
CARE 52
CARE classroom 55
Phases of the CARE Program 55
SPECIAL EDUCATION HOMEBOUND OVERVIEW 56
RELATED SERVICE GUIDELINES 57
ASSISTIVE TECHNOLOGY 59
ADAPTED PHYSICAL EDUCATION 61
SURROGATE PARENT CONSIDERATIONS 64
TRANSFER OF PARENTAL RIGHTS 65
GRADUATION - FOUNDATIONS PLAN WITH ENDORSEMENT 66

SCHOOL YEAR TIMELINES

Date	Activity
First Day of School	General Education teachers and Special Education teachers have accessed ARD/IEP, schedule page with accommodations, BIPS, and other pertinent information (SPED teachers will access eSped, gen ed teachers receive this information via Branching Mind bundles).
First Day of School	Special Education teachers have created a “Monitor List”
First Day of School	Implement procedures for tracking services with the district service log
First Day of School	Review Records, Confidentiality and Documentation
End of 1st Full Week	Review Supervision of Paraprofessionals
End of 1st Full Week	Teachers of students ages 3-5; review Early Childhood Outcomes requirements
End of 2nd Full Week	Review Progress Report Procedures and timelines
Last Day of September	Review all folder students’ transition plans for ages 13 and above and make a plan for implementing assessments, making progress on objectives and coordinated activities throughout the school year
By end of 2nd week of October	Secondary: Review Transition Considerations, Adult Service Providers, Summary of Performance
1st Day of Spring Semester	General Education teachers and Special Education teachers have accessed ARD/IEP, schedule page with accommodations, BIPS, and other pertinent information (SPED teachers will access eSped, gen ed teachers receive this information via Branching Mind bundles.

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COORDINATION OF REGULAR AND SPECIAL EDUCATION

Regular and Special Education guidelines require evidence of coordination of regular and Special Education personnel in programming for students with disabilities. Each teacher working with a student with disabilities must be aware of relevant sections of the IEP, including responsibilities related to implementing the IEP (goals, benchmarks, accommodations/modifications) determined appropriate by the ARD Committee. The PLAAFP page, IEP goals and objectives, schedule page, accommodations and modifications, state/district-wide testing, the behavior intervention plan (when appropriate), and any pertinent information in the deliberations of the ARD meeting should be conveyed to each teacher. For students placed in regular education classes primarily for inclusion purposes, it is important for teachers to have a clear understanding of the primary goal with these students. If a teacher is uncomfortable with the accommodations and modifications in his/her class, the teacher needs to understand that only an ARD Committee decision can change these. A teacher may request an ARD meeting for the purpose of discussing a change in any part of a student's IEP, including accommodations and modifications.

It is the responsibility of the Special Education student's case manager to inform each of the student's teachers where and how to access the relevant sections of each student's IEP. The case manager will create and download a bundle in Frontline from the screens with IEP goals and objectives, schedule page, accommodations and modifications, state/district-wide testing, the behavior intervention plan (when appropriate). The case manager will archive this bundle log in eSped, save the student's bundle log with their first and last name and upload to Branching Minds.

At the beginning of the school year the deadline for completing this process is the 1st day of classes.

The case manager will confirm each teacher has access to their students bundle via email. The emails serve as the evidence of receipt.

After each ARD Meeting: Case Manager creates an updated bundle and communicate with the student's teachers to make them aware that there are new documents that should be viewed and implemented. The case manager will also need to facilitate this exchange of information if the student's schedule changes from one semester to another as documented in the IEP.

At the beginning of each semester for secondary, the beginning of the school year for elementary, and no later than three days following the notification that new information has been uploaded following an ARD meeting, Special Education teachers will notify the general education teachers to review a new bundle.

Bundle Timeline:

- Beginning of the Year:
  - Bundles must be viewed by all teachers by the first day of school.
  - Receipts must be uploaded by the end of the second week of school.
- After an ARD:
  - Bundles must be viewed by all teachers within 2 days of notice of a bundle upload.
  - Receipts must be uploaded within a week of notice of bundle upload.

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SPECIAL EDUCATION SERVICE LOG

The district maintains a Special Education Service Tracking Log to document the delivery of services outlined in a student's Individualized Education Program (IEP). This log serves as an official record to ensure compliance with state and federal requirements and to support accurate monitoring of service provision. The Service Tracking Log is used to verify that students receive the services specified in their IEP and to support communication and accountability among service providers. It is not used to evaluate student behavior or academic performance.

Documentation from the Service Tracking Log may be reviewed during ARD meetings or made available to parents upon request.
The Service Tracking Log includes:

- The type of Special Education service provided
- The date and duration of each service session
- The staff member delivering the service, who will initial each service
- Brief instructional notes, when applicable

Please note that this log is intended for use by Special Education teachers and paraprofessionals who provide instructional academic or behavior support. Other related and instructional service providers have their own dedicated systems for service tracking.

INTERSECTION OF 504 AND SPECIAL EDUCATION

Each student evaluated for Special Education who does not qualify, as well as each student who is dismissed from Special Education with an identified disability, shall be considered for possible referral for a Section 504 evaluation on a case-by-case basis. If at any time the 504 Committee determines that the student needs Special Education or related aids and services in order to receive educational benefit, a Special Education referral should be initiated. With respect to students who are no longer served by Special Education due to parents' revocation of consent for continued Special Education services, the school will offer a Section 504 evaluation. The school should make reasonable efforts to explain to the parents the 504 process and potential protections in these situations. Should the parents refuse consent for a 504 evaluation, the school will document such refusal.

It is important to note that an evaluated student not qualifying for or a student dismissed from Special Education services, is not automatically eligible for Section 504 services. Eligibility for Section 504 is based on an evaluative process.

Changing to/from 504 from/to Special Education:

If a non 504 student is a DNQ (Did Not Qualify) for Special Education Services or a student is being dismissed from Special Education Services, and a referral for a Section 504 evaluation is made:
The ARD Facilitator/Special Education Assessment Personnel will contact the 504 Facilitator at least one week before the ARD meeting to let them know that the student may be referred for a Section 504 evaluation, pending the ARD decision, and include the date and time of the ARD meeting.

The ARD Facilitator/Special Education Assessment Personnel will contact the 504 Facilitator with the outcome of the ARD decision.

If a referral for a 504 evaluation is made, the 504 Facilitator will connect with the parent after the ARD meeting to get consent from the parents and set up a 504 meeting, preferably within a week.

If a 504 student has been evaluated for Special Education Services and meets eligibility for Special Education:

- The ARD Facilitator/Special Education Assessment Personnel will contact the 504 Facilitator before the ARD meeting to let them know that an ARD is scheduled to determine Special Education eligibility and placement for a 504 student.
- The ARD Facilitator/Special Education Assessment Personnel will follow up with the 504 Facilitator when the final determination has been made.

If the student is found eligible for Special Education services, the 504 Facilitator will change the student's 504 designation from "Currently Served" to "Dismissed" in eSped and notify the campus PEIMS clerk to remove the 504 designation in PEIMS.

CONTINUUM OF SPECIAL EDUCATION SERVICES DOCUMENTATION & GUIDANCE

Uvalde CISD provides a continuum of services for students who are eligible for Special Education. Services are designed for the successful implementation of each student's Individual Education Plan (IEP) in the least restrictive environment. The IEP outlines the specially designed instruction a student with disabilities receives as a result of his/her disability.

Decision making for placement MUST include (in the following order) a review of the student's present levels of academic achievement and functional performance (PLAAFP), development of goals to address the student's areas of critical need, determination of services, and then determining the most appropriate placement to provide services.

The ARD Committee for each Special Education student must meet at least annually to determine an appropriate educational program for the student. It is the responsibility of the Special Education case manager to document the implementation of the services determined by the ARD Committee.

Speech therapists, other instructional services providers, and related service providers will keep documentation of the services they provide, including frequency, duration, and location of services and documentation of progress, including the development and dissemination of progress reports. These providers are responsible for notifying the case manager of any concerns related to student progress. The case manager will maintain documentation of the other services provided to the student through the district service tracking log.

Special Education case managers should develop a system for getting interim progress reports and grades as soon as possible. Address failing grades in a timely manner. Request an ARD Committee meeting any time it appears that adjustments to the IEP are necessary for student access.

Other Special Education service providers (such as social skills, Special Education counseling, etc.) should document all services, including the frequency, duration, and location of the service.

INCLUSION

Inclusion Services provide specially designed instruction and support directly within the general education classroom. This service model ensures that students with specialized learning needs receive grade-level TEKS instruction alongside their peers, backed by the targeted strategies, accommodations, and modifications outlined in their IEP.

A certified trained paraprofessional collaborates with the General Education teacher to adapt assignments, pre-teach/reteach concepts, and scaffold learning in real time. Inclusion is an active instructional model—it is not intended solely for quiet work completion or independent study time. Instead, support is structured to build independent learning strategies, foster peer collaboration, and help students successfully access the general curriculum in an inclusive setting.

CO-TEACH

Co-Teach Services bring a General Education teacher and a Special Education teacher together as equal partners in a single general education classroom. This model blends content expertise with specialized instructional strategies, ensuring students with unique learning needs can master grade-level standards alongside their peers.

Both teachers plan, instruct, and assess students together using flexible grouping strategies—such as team teaching, station teaching, or parallel teaching. Co-teaching provides seamless, real-time support, pre-teaching, and reteaching without pulling students out of the room. It is an active instructional partnership designed to foster student independence, encourage peer collaboration, and deliver specially designed instruction inside a rich, inclusive learning environment.

RESOURCE

Resource classes are designed for Special Education students who require specially designed instruction related to core content or development of organizational, study, and/or social skills. For core content, student skills are more than two years below grade level. Resource is TEKS-based instruction and remediation in the content area skills essential for educational and vocational progress. The components of the services include a number of hierarchical stages which establish and ultimately transfer strategies and skills to all aspects of the student's educational setting. Resource is not intended to be for work completion time for core content instruction in the general education classroom. Instruction is delivered in a structured environment that builds understanding progressively.

Support criteria for this level of support:

- Data indicating that the student would be unsuccessful without the support.
- Degree of student need requires instruction by a certified Special Education teacher.
- Student requires reteaching, preteaching, or modification of content, instruction, and/or assessment, as specified in the PLAAFP/IEP. This may include core content instruction through the use of modified curricular materials.
- Student requires smaller group instruction.

- Student skills should be at least 2 years or more below grade level, as measured on multiple tools.

CHOICES ATTITUDES RESPONSIBILITY EXPECTATIONS (CARE)

CARE is a collaborative inclusion model, involving research-based instructional practices designed specifically to help students with social, communication, and behavioral skills. CARE will provide instruction and support for students served under IDEA, presenting with significant social, communicative, and/or behavioral challenges. CARE staff are trained to provide ongoing instruction, coaching, and support to identified students throughout the school.

For consideration into the CARE program, there must be data indicating that the student would be unsuccessful without additional support and evidence that student-specific replacement behavior and social communication interventions (i.e. BIP, accommodations, behavioral supports/strategies, goals/objectives) have been previously implemented with fidelity and have been unsuccessful, as documented through data.

FUNCTIONAL LIFE SKILLS (FLS)

Definition of FLS:
Instruction provided in a Special Education setting by a Special Education teacher, with the assistance of a trained paraprofessional(s), actively supporting students by providing specially-designed instruction, accommodations, modifications and supports as identified in the IEP. This support is designed to assist students in accessing grade level TEKS through pre-requisite, vertically-aligned skills using an alternate curriculum. This support is designed specifically for students with significant intellectual and cognitive disabilities.

Purpose of FLS:
Ensure students receive TEKS and researched-based instruction using vertically aligned prerequisite skills and activities differentiated to meet individual student needs through an alternate curriculum. Ensure students are cognitively engaged in learning. Ensure that students receive the specially-designed instruction agreed upon in their IEPs. Facilitate increased student independence and self-advocacy.

Student Criteria for this level of support need:
- Data indicates that the student would be unsuccessful without the support.
- Student performs significantly below grade level across all content and skills
- Student requires access to grade/course enrolled TEKS through pre-requisite, vertically aligned skills. Pre-requisite skill level instruction indicates that the TEKS is accessed at such a modified level from the original student expectation that it can no longer be implemented in another setting
- Student requires accommodations that cannot be accessed independently.
- Student is eligible for the STAAR-ALT 2 assessment based on all areas of the Eligibility of STAAR Alternate 2 criteria if applicable

Documentation in the IEP:
- FIE must indicate that the student has an intellectual disability or other cognitive or developmental impairment

- PLAAFP includes data indicating need
- IEP must specify instruction at the prerequisite skill level (TEKS), in a smaller setting/lower adult to student ratio, and requiring intensely specially designed instruction that can only be provided in this setting
- Evidence of progress monitoring
- ARD consideration to determine the Eligibility of STAAR ALT 2 if applicable. When appropriate, review and complete the Eligibility for STAAR Alternate 2
    - STAAR Alternate 2 Participation Requirements Step I
    - ARD administrator discuss and complete the assurances
        - STAAR Alternate 2 Participation Requirements Step II
- Priority subjects: All core subjects (Reading/ELA, Math, Science & Social Studies) communication, social skills, and daily living skills
- Each subject is considered individually, with consideration of student need and where the IEP is best implemented.
- Work-based learning, CBI, and other skills needs are driven by student transition goals

Priority tasks:

- Provision of specially designed instruction is data-driven and aligned with each student's individual IEP
- Implementation of all modifications and accommodations as outlined in the IEP (modify lesson plans, materials, and instructional support based on student needs)
- Data collection and progress monitoring based on each student's individual IEP
- Collaboration with related service providers for planning and implementation of instruction
- Implementation of all behavior strategies as outlined in the student's BIP/IEP, when appropriate
- Individualized communication systems, supported through the use of visuals and augmentative or alternative devices, when appropriate
- Documentation of Medicaid billing

Staff/Structure Requirements:

- Certified Special Education teacher with appropriate general education generalist certification and special training
- Paraprofessional support as determined by individual student need
- Intensive support needs delineated in IEP, when appropriate

PERSONAL CARE SERVICES

Personal Care Services are provided to persons with disabilities which enables them to accomplish tasks that they would normally do for themselves if they did not have a disability. These services are documented in the student's IEP and are medically necessary for one or more of the following reasons:

- Physical limitation related to the student's disability that affects activities of daily living
- Cognitive limitation related to the student's disability that affects activities of daily living
- Behavioral limitation related to the student's disability that affects activities of daily living
    - Student requires monitoring while performing personal tasks
    - Student needs verbal reminders in order to perform personal tasks
    - Student needs physical assistance in performing personal tasks
    - Student needs to be supervised and redirected to facilitate student's safety and

the safety of others
- Student needs assistance performing personal hygiene activities
- Student needs a program that provides constant supervision throughout the day
- There is also daily documentation of these services to justify the district's billing for Medicaid reimbursements through Frontline Medicaid

The allowable billable services are as follows:

- Bathing
- Dressing
- Eating
- Escort (Assisting with making transportation arrangements; accompanying to healthcare appointments; monitoring behaviors that create unsafe situations such as seatbelt removal, opening car door or elopement)
- Locomotion or Mobility (Assisting with moving between locations: walking, wheelchair, walker or other mobility equipment)
- Meal Preparation
- Medication Assistance (Assisting with oral medications normally self-administered)
- Money Management (Assisting with finance management; adhering to a budget; paying bills)
- Personal Hygiene
- Positioning
- Telephone use or other Communication assistance (Assisting in making or receiving calls; managing/setting up communication devices)
- Toileting
- Transferring (Assisting with moving from one surface to another i.e.: bed, chair, wheelchair or vehicle to new surface; moving to standing or sitting position; moving student with lift devices)

MEDICAID/SHARS

The School Health and Related Services (SHARS) program allows Texas local educational agencies (LEAs) and shared service arrangements (SSAs) to request reimbursement for Medicaid health-related services. The admission, review, and dismissal (ARD) committee determines SHARS services. Services must be medically necessary and reasonable to ensure that children with disabilities are able to participate in the educational program. In UCISD, certain Special Education teachers may be able to request for Personal Care Services delivered in the classroom. Typically, this occurs in special program classrooms, like FLS and ECSE, as those students need the allowable PCS more often.

SHARS reimbursement is available for students with parental consent to release identifying information to Medicaid and who meet all of the following requirements:

- 20 years of age and younger
- currently eligible for Medicaid

- enrolled in a public school's Special Education program
- meet requirements for Special Education described in the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA)
- may have a current individualized education program (IEP) that prescribes the needed services.

Services covered by SHARS include:

- audiology services
- counseling
- nursing services
- occupational therapy
- personal care services
- physical therapy
- physician services
- psychological services, including assessments
- speech therapy
- specialized transportation as defined by the Health and Human Services Commission (HHSC)

COORDINATION WITH OUTSIDE SERVICE PROVIDERS

Many students served in Special Education or with a 504 plan may receive outside or private services such as Speech, OT, ABA, Counseling, Dyslexia, or other services. Often these services are based on a medical or clinical need and support the 'whole health' of the child whereas school-based services are a component of the education plan.

When the IEP or 504 team is aware of an outside service provider, consent to collaborate with the provider should be requested of the parent/guardian. The purpose of this collaboration is to support a complimentary rather than contradictory service delivery. To the extent possible and appropriate, collaboration serves the purposes of ensuring that standardized measures are not administered in such a way as to interfere with the utility of the results, services provided do not result in the aforementioned direct contradiction in theory or practice, and to be vigilant for duplication of federally funded services (duplication of effort).

The responsibility for the provision of a Free and Appropriate Public Education (FAPE) lies with the school district, campus and Special Education team. Private service providers do not act under the guidance of TEA or IDEA in regards to providing FAPE. No district-provided service or support should be diminished because a student has outside services. Additionally, the coordination with outside providers should not extend to outside providers attempting to provide services on campus (virtual or in-person) during the school day. District Special Education policy prohibits the provision of outside or private services on campus unless the outside or private service provider has been determined to be required for the provision of FAPE. This would be documented in the student's IEP and funded by the campus or school district.

RECORDS, CONFIDENTIALITY, AND DOCUMENTATION

Records

The Special Education Director is the official custodian of records; no records are to be released by campus and/or Special Education staff. Original Special Education records are securely maintained within the Special Education Department. All formal requests for records must be directed to the Special Education Office for processing. The records contained in the Special Education audit file are maintained for seven years after services have ceased.

Special Education records should not be released from the campus or the teacher. Information concerning Special Education students can only be released with written permission from the parent, guardian of the child, or adult student. The Special Education office maintains a log of requests/releases of Special Education records. Requests for Special Education records should be forwarded to the Special Education office.

Subpoenas for Special Education records should be forwarded to the Special Education Director. This includes subpoenas from law enforcement agencies or requests due to a court order. There are legal requirements that must be followed in regards to subpoenas; in some cases, including the notification of parents or the adult student. Additionally, a release of records for a subpoena must be documented.

If you receive a request or subpoena to appear in court to testify in any issue related to a student with a disability, call the Special Education office for guidance.

Confidentiality

All school records must be maintained according to federal and state requirements, including compliance with the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act of 1974 (FERPA) and the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA). District and campus policy and handbooks should contain information concerning the release of confidential records.

Some things to remember about confidentiality:

Most documentation you keep on a student is considered an educational record. ***Keep documentation objective and professional.***

With an open records request, you may be required to provide personal notes (except for sole possession notes), discipline records, calendar information, emails, texts from your personal cell phone, audio tapes, inter-campus documentation, personnel information, testing documentation and protocols, communication logs, etc. **Be exceptionally** cautious with email **communication.** It is district policy and the staff member's responsibility to maintain professional standards for email communication. The district email is a communication vehicle for work-related conversation and every exchange should be written as if it would be read by the parent of the student, the principal, and possibly the student themself. Be positive, relevant, succinct, and results oriented.

- Correctly document your reason for accessing a student's eSped information (initial screen after selecting a student).
- If records include information on more than one student, parents only have the right to review the information relating to their child or to be informed of that specific information.

- At age 18, the right to release/request records transfers to the adult student unless the parent has legal guardianship or power of attorney.
- In cases of child custody/divorce, the filed legal paperwork should be the guideline for determining which parent makes educational decisions. Often both parents have the right to receive educational information and view records.

Documentation

Contact with parents or guardians should always be documented. Develop a practice of maintaining documentation of *all* telephone calls. Use the eSped screen titled "Parent Contact Log" for documentation of notes home, copies of home/school communication logs, meeting/staffing notes, etc. **Remember to keep your documentation objective and professional.**

Make it a practice to shred information if it is no longer needed (i.e. work samples, old tests, draft IEPS). If in doubt about destroying a document, contact the Special Education office for guidance. Remember that any information that is student-identifiable must be provided in the event of a records request.

SCHEDULING AND STUDENT LIST OF ANNUAL ARDS

The Special Education Office will maintain a master ARD schedule and will use a campus specific ARD scheduler to monitor upcoming meetings and provide campuses with reminders. Campuses are expected to take action upon receiving a reminder and ensure that all required steps are completed within applicable timelines.

When an ARD is approaching its deadline and has not been scheduled or completed, the Special Education Office will communicate with the campus and may escalate the concern to campus and/or district administration as appropriate. Once an ARD has been completed the campus will update the campus ARD Schedule indicating the date the meeting was held and send the paperwork to the Special Education Office via interoffice mail within two business days. The PEIMS clerk will enter the information into Skyward and update the Master ARD schedule.

Campuses will plan ahead for having an end-of-the-year or late 2nd semester Annual ARD for all students whose annual ARDs were held prior to October 1st.

PARAPROFESSIONALS

The definition of "para" is "alongside" so paraprofessional means someone who works alongside a professional – in this case a certified educator.

Provisions in Federal Legislation:

IDEA 2004 states:
A state may allow paraprofessionals and assistants who are appropriately trained and supervised, in accordance with State law, regulation, or written policy, in meeting the requirements of this part to be used to assist in the provision of Special Education and related services to children with disabilities under Part B of the Act.

Paraprofessionals are school employees who:

1. Work under the supervision of teachers or other licensed/certificated professionals who have responsibility for-
2. Identifying learner needs,
3. Developing and implementing programs to meet learners needs,
4. Assessing learner performance, and
5. Evaluation the effectiveness of education programs and related services, and
6. Who assist with the delivery of instructional and other direct services as assigned and developed by certified/licensed professional practitioners.

Duties And Responsibilities

A paraprofessional's role is to supplement rather than replace or stand in for the certified professional.

Instructional Support

- Help the teacher prepare instructional materials, including the provision of accommodations and modifications.
- Present lessons or portions of lessons as directed by the teacher.
- Help maintain a neat and orderly classroom.
- Help with inventory, care, and maintenance of equipment.
- Assist students in accessing and using classroom materials and equipment.
- Help the teacher take administrative records and educational data and prepare required reports.
- Provide orientation and assistance to substitute teachers.
- Assist with the provision of accommodations and modifications as directed by the teacher.

Student Management

- Assist students with physical disabilities according to their needs, including transferring to and from wheelchairs, lifting, or positioning.
- Assist students with physical needs and personal care, including feeding, bathroom needs, and personal hygiene.
- Help manage behavior of students. This includes intervening in crisis situations and restraining disruptive or dangerous student behavior as needed.

- Assume responsibility for learning and adapting to each student's special medical, physical, communicative, and emotional needs.
- Work with individual students or small groups to develop motor skills and conduct instructional exercises assigned by the teacher.
- Help supervise students throughout the school day, inside and outside the classroom. This includes lunchroom, bus, playground, and field trips.
- Keep the teacher informed of special needs or problems of individual students.

Other

- Maintain confidentiality regarding student and coworker information as required by FERPA.
- Participate in staff development training programs, faculty meetings, and special events as assigned.
- Supervise a group of students in the temporary absence of the responsible teacher.

A paraprofessional's primary responsibility is to provide assistance to the supervising teacher by performing the tasks assigned by the teacher.

Inappropriate Responsibilities for a Special Education Paraprofessional

- Be solely responsible for Special Education instruction or related services.
- Be responsible for selecting or administering formal diagnostic or psychological instruments or for interpreting the results of those instruments.
- Be responsible for selecting, programming or prescribing educational activities or materials for the students without the supervision and/or guidance of the teacher.
- Be solely responsible for preparing lesson plans or initiating original concept instruction.
- Be assigned to implement the Individual Education Plan (IEP) for disabled students without direct supervision/guidance and involvement from the certified professional.
- Be employed in lieu of a Special Education certified professional.
- Be used as a substitute teacher.
- Perform nursing procedures or administer medications without the consent and training of the teacher/nurse.
- Be asked to solely perform clerical duties on a regular basis.
- Be asked to perform duties out of the scope of a paraprofessional.
- Be asked to communicate student progress or concerns.

Discussing specific facts about the students is a violation of the students' confidentiality rights if the other person doesn't have an educational involvement. Remember that matters regarding students are confidential and cannot be a topic of public discussion - not even in the teacher's lounge, not at the grocery store, not with other paraprofessionals who do not work with the student. Even if a para does not mention a student's name, talking about an incident can give identifiable information.

Many students receive support at their home or in the community (like an ABA clinic). It is the

teacher's responsibility to communicate with those professionals about school matters, but a para may be asked for input or observations. Even though the district may know the person has an involvement or professional relationship with the family, the school must have a signed release from the parent in order to legally collaborate. This is true even if the person providing support at the home or in the community is a school staff member. If the para is also the person supporting a student at home, it is imperative that the student's parents sign a release for that para to communicate with school personnel about matters that happen outside of the school setting.

Relationships with Students and Parents

- Discuss school problems and confidential matters only with appropriate personnel. Allow the teacher to be the communication partner with parents/family members about school related topics.
- Avoid engaging in discriminatory practices based on a student's disability, race, sex, cultural background, religion, or socio-economic status.
- Respect the dignity, privacy, and individuality of all students, their families, and staff members.
- Be a positive role model.
- Learn the student's name, interests, and other characteristics as soon as possible.

Relationship with Teachers and Related Service Personnel

- Recognize the teacher as the supervisor in the setting.
- Establish effective communication and a positive relationship with the teacher.
- Discuss concerns and questions about teaching methods with the teacher at an appropriate time, i.e., after, not during, instructional period.
- Readily share information about students and the educational setting with the teacher.
- Refer concerns about the students, parents, teachers, administrators, and community members to the supervising teacher.
- Be cooperative and honest with all professional staff, administrators and support staff members.

SUPERVISION OF PARAPROFESSIONALS

Teachers must provide supervision of paraprofessionals in accordance with TEA guidelines.

As defined by law, a paraprofessional is an employee who:

- Provides one-on-one tutoring if such tutoring is scheduled at a time when a student would not otherwise receive instruction from a teacher
- Assists with classroom management, such as organizing instructional and other materials
- Conducts parental involvement activities
- Provides support in a library or media center
- Acts as a translator

- Provides instructional support services under the direct supervision of a teacher

The U.S. Department of Education's final regulations state that a teacher must do ***three*** things in providing direct supervision to a paraprofessional:

1. Plan your paraprofessional's instructional activities. Paraprofessionals make a valuable contribution to our student's education, so it is our district's responsibility to use their time and skills wisely. Part of that effort means planning the paraprofessional's activities in advance. As the classroom teacher or Special Education teacher, you must decide what the paraprofessional will do while working with you and your students. With appropriate planning, paraprofessionals can be equipped to work with students without direct supervision for short periods of time. Plans for the paraprofessional must include an account of how paraprofessionals will spend their time in your classroom on permitted tasks such as:
    a. One-on-one tutoring outside regular teacher instructional time
    b. Large group instruction
    c. Small group instruction
    d. Classroom management
    e. Computer instruction
    f. Translation and interpreting services
    g. Other instructional support
2. Evaluate how the paraprofessional's students are doing. As the classroom teacher, you have final responsibility for evaluating the achievement and progress of the students with whom the paraprofessional is working. While you are not required to provide all of the actual marking of papers, you must review the students' work/performance with enough frequency and detail to understand how each student is progressing. If students are not demonstrating progress in their work with the paraprofessional, it will be the teacher's responsibility to intervene in order to ensure student progress.
3. Classroom placement. The need for paraprofessional support for a particular student or classroom should be determined through an evidence-based process.

TEACHER AND PARAPROFESSIONAL SCHEDULES

Daily schedules for Special Education teachers and Special Education paraprofessionals should be comprehensive and descriptive and will likely need to be fine-tuned often. It is important to have these schedules completed/up to date as you may be asked to provide them if there is a question about appropriate staffing, IEP implementation, or if a student is injured or injures others.

Schedules should include the following information:

- Name, campus, school year, and date created or revised
- Supervising teacher (for paraprofessionals)
- Any duties or additional assignments outside of the classroom
- Lunch, including the time period
- Conference, including the time period (for professional teaching staff)
- Class period or time intervals, classroom setting, curriculum area addressed,

and students served, including first and last names, during that time interval

When developing your schedule, ask yourself, “Would a substitute be able to follow my schedule on any given day and know exactly what to do?”

EARLY CHILDHOOD SPECIAL EDUCATION (ECSE)

Early Childhood Special Education (ECSE) is a state and federally mandated program for young children with disabilities ages 3 through 5 and not enrolled in kindergarten. Eligible children with disabilities are entitled to receive a free appropriate public education (FAPE) under the Individuals with Disabilities Act (IDEA) Part B, Section 619 in the least restrictive environment (LRE) in accordance with their individual needs. Children who meet eligibility criteria may receive ECSE services in a variety of settings such speech-language therapy, pre-kindergarten classroom, resource/instructional support, in the home, self-contained classrooms, or in community settings such as Head Start and pre-school. In Texas, services for eligible children with disabilities ages 3-5 and not in kindergarten are provided free of charge through the public-school system.

ECSE refers to the services provided by the school district, not the place where they are provided.

Early Childhood Outcomes

Early Childhood Outcomes entry data is required within 30 days of the service start date for all children, ages three through five, who are initially placed in Special Education, and for any child, ages three through five, who has received Special Education services in another school district and transfers to this district. Children in Kindergarten do not require Early Childhood Outcome information to be completed.

Early Childhood Outcomes **exit** data should be reported for any student who has aged out of the ECSE program or been dismissed from Special Education.

1. An exit record is required when a child:
   a) Exits Part B of ECSE
   b) Transitions to kindergarten
   c) Has received at least 6 months of ECSE between the entry date and the exit date
2. When a student will turn 5 prior to September 1st of the following school year, the student must be exited out using an Exit COSF and marked as Aged Out before the current school year ends
   a) For example, a student who will turn 5 in July will need an Exit COSF completed during the last 30 days of school.
3. Additional Exit scenarios:
   b) If a child transfers out of state, an exit record must be completed if the child received at least 6 months of services
   c) If a child turns 6 years old without transitioning to kindergarten, an exit record must be completed

Exit data are ***not*** *reported* for students with entry data who:

- Left prior to six months receiving Special Education services

- Were receiving Special Education services for at least six months and then moved out of the district
- Left for another reason (i.e. death)

The Special Education or the speech pathologist serving as the child's case manager must be trained in the completion of the COSF. Contact the Special Education Director if you are responsible for completing this form and have questions or are in need of additional training.

PROGRESS REPORTS

IDEA **requires** progress reports for each student. The progress report should reflect:

- How the child's progress toward the annual goal described will be measured
- How the child's parents will be regularly informed (by such means as periodic report cards), at least as often as parents are informed of their non-disabled children's progress,
- and the sufficiency of the child's progress toward the annual goals as stated in the IEP.

Progress reports should be generated and archived using eSped. Progress reports must be generated for each IEP in the student's ARD Committee document, including academic, behavioral, study skills, and related service IEPs. After the progress report is generated, a copy will distributed to the parent on the same day report cards are made available to the parent.

If progress is not seen and/or regression is occurring, the Special Education teacher should do one or more of the following:

- Call a parent conference
- Call a staffing
- Enhance the current program
- Call an ARD

Providers of Dyslexia Instruction (PDI) will write specific dyslexia progress reports per HB 3928 and the Texas Dyslexia Handbook.

<u>At the End of Each Nine Weeks</u>

Last day of the grading period - All Special Education staff and service providers (Dyslexia, Speech, OT, PT, VI, O&M, AI, and Counseling, etc.) should have their progress reports completed in eSped by **4:00 p.m.** so Administrators will be able to review them. The progress report will be dated with the last day of that nine-week period.

The Thursday after the last day of the reporting period - Case managers will have completed progress reports, archived, and sent home through.

TRANSITION CONSIDERATIONS

For each student receiving Special Education services, beginning prior to the student's 14th birthday (or younger, if the ARD committee determines it is appropriate), the following issues must be considered in the development of the IEP, and if appropriate, integrated into the IEP.

- Appropriate student involvement in the student's transition to life outside the public school system;
- If the student is younger than age 18, appropriate parental involvement in the student's transition;
- If the student is 18 or older, appropriate parental involvement in the student's transition, if the parent is invited to participate by the student or the school district in which the student is enrolled;
- Measurable postsecondary goals integrating education/training, employment, and if appropriate, independent living;
- Determination of need for a Functional Vocational Evaluation;
- If the student is at least 18 years of age, the availability of age-appropriate instructional environments; and
- Appropriate circumstances for referring a student or the student's parents to a governmental agency for services.

Each IEP must include coordinated, measurable annual goals, at least one of which facilitates movement toward the achievement of the student's postsecondary goal(s). The goal/objective must be explicitly aligned to the postsecondary goals for education/training, employment and if appropriate, independent living.

Align the IEP goal with the postsecondary goals developed in the transition plan. State explicitly that mastery of the goal will facilitate achievement of the student's postsecondary goal.

The Transition Plan is included in the ARD Committee documentation. It contains measurable postsecondary goals and transition services in the form of coordinated activities which take into account student preferences, interests, strengths, and needs. A draft of the transition plan is completed with the student prior to the annual ARD Committee meeting for students age 13 and up. Each year after grade 7 or 8, the results of the previous year's activities should be documented.

Transition services mean a coordinated set of activities for a student with a disability that:

- Is designed to be a results-oriented process, that is focused on improving the academic and functional achievement of the student with a disability to facilitate the student's movement from school to post-school activities, including post-secondary education, vocational education, integrated employment (including supported employment), continuing and adult education, adult services, independent living, or community participation;
- Is based on the individual student's needs, taking into account the student's strengths, preferences, and interests; and
- Includes instruction, related services, community experiences, the development of employment and other post-school adult living objectives, and when appropriate,
- acquisition of daily living skills and functional vocational evaluation. It addresses age-

appropriate transition assessment and includes a course of study (4-6 year plan) that supports the student's post-secondary goals.
- Transition services are documented in eSped. A copy of the Personalized Learning Plan should be included in the IEP documentation.

The Transition Plan should be completed in eSped prior to each annual ARD Committee meeting for students in grades 8-12 or earlier if determined appropriate. Contact the Special Education office for help completing the eSped electronic version of the transition plan.

The transition needs for a student should include, if appropriate, a statement of interagency responsibilities. If a participating agency, other than the school, fails to provide the transition services described in the IEP, the case manager should reconvene the ARD Committee to identify alternative strategies to meet the transition objectives for the child.

TEC §29.0111. Transition and Employment Designee
The school district must designate at least one employee to serve as the district's designee on transition and employment services for students enrolled in Special Education programs. They will be able to provide information and resources about effective transition planning and services and interagency coordination to ensure that local school staff communicate and collaborate with:

1. Students enrolled in Special Education programs and the parents of those students; and
2. As appropriate, local and regional staff of the:
   a. Health and Human Services Commission;
   b. Department of Aging and Disability Services;
   c. Department of Assistive and Rehabilitative Services;
   d. Department of State Health Services; and
   e. Department of Family and Protective Services.

TEC §29.0112. Transition and Employment Guide
The Texas Education Agency, with assistance from the Health and Human Services Commission, has developed the Texas Transition and Employment Guide for students enrolled in Special Education programs and their parents to provide information on statewide services and programs that assist in the transition to life outside the public school system. The guide is divided into sections on Self Advocacy, Transition Services, Employment and Supported Employment, Social Security Programs, Community and Long-Term Services and Supports, Postsecondary Educational Programs and Services, Information Sharing, and Guardianship and Alternatives. Each section has phone numbers, emails and websites to help students and parents find what they need.

Transition planning tools are provided to Special Education teachers at the beginning of the school year and can be accessed all year long through the Transition website on the Depot. These include the structured transition interview (electronic form) and the Summary of Performance.

Adult Service Providers

Texas Workforce Commission (TWC)
TWC is designated as the state's principal authority on the vocational rehabilitation of Texans with disabilities, except persons with visual impairments and the legally blind. The Division's main purpose is to assist people with disabilities to participate in their communities by achieving employment of choice, college readiness, living as independently as possible, and accessing high quality services.

The Vocational Rehabilitation (VR) program, a state-federal partnership since 1929, helps people with disabilities prepare for, find, and keep jobs. Work related services are individualized and may include counseling, training, medical treatment, assistive devices, job placement assistance, and other services.

Eligibility criteria for this program include the presence of physical or mental disability that results in a substantial impediment to employment, whether the individual is employable after receiving services, and whether services are required to achieve employment outcomes. This program helps students with disabilities plan the jump from school to work or school to postsecondary education options. TWC VR counselors provide consultative and technical assistance to public school personnel in planning the move from school to work for students with disabilities. TWC Regional Transition Specialists assist VR counselors in coordination with schools, independent school districts, and regional Educational Service Centers.

Transition Services for Persons Who are Blind or Visually Impaired The Division for Blind Services Transition Program assists young people who are blind or visually impaired to make an effective transition from secondary school to adult life and the world of work. The program prepares young consumers who are at least 10 years old and under the age of 24 and who may have multiple disabilities, to make informed decisions about their future goals. Consumers and their families are provided with:

- Opportunities for career exploration
- Opportunities to gain work experience while in high school
- Feedback about the consumer's current academic, vocational, and independent living skills
- Training in skills needed to achieve their goals, and
- Adaptive tools to achieve their goals

For information on any Division for Blind Services program or to apply for service, contact:

TWC Division for Blind Services 4800 N. Lamar Blvd., Suite 340
Austin, TX 78756-3178
(800) 628-5115

Texas Department of State Health Services (DSHS)
Community Mental Health Services are now provided through the Texas Department of State Health Services. DSHS consolidated the community mental health services and state hospital programs of the Department of Mental Health and Developmental Disability, the alcohol and drug abuse services of the Commission on Alcohol and Drug Abuse, and the health program of the Department of Health. Children's Mental Health services include:

- Counseling
- Crisis Hotline

- Crisis Intervention Services
- Family Case Management
- Family Partner
- Family Training
- Flexible Community Supports
- Skills Training for Children
- Intensive Case Management
- Medication Training and Support
- Parent Support Group
- Pharmacological Management
- Pre-Admission Assessment
- Provision of Medication
- Respite
- Routine Case Management
- Screening
- Skills Training and Development
- Supplemental Nursing Services

MHDD as follows:
Add local contact information

Texas Health and Human Services https://hhs.texas.gov
https://hhs.teas.gov/services/disability

Health and Human Services include:

- Day Programs
- Residential Services
- Supported Home Living
- Foster and Companion Care Respite
- Service Coordination Community Supports
- Vocational Services (21 and older)

ADULT TRANSITION SERVICES (18+)

Services for students who are 18 years old or older are provided as part of FAPE (Free and Appropriate Public Education). The services are geared toward the student's transition from high school to adult life. Instead of grade level curriculum, which the student has already completed, these services include the domains of adult life: life-long learning, vocational/employment skills, adult living, and social/leisure.

18+ transition services provide young adults, ages 18-22 years old, with the skills and knowledge necessary for a successful transition into the community and adult living, based on the ARD committee determining the needs. The purpose of 18+ is to support each student in:

- building a sustainable adult schedule

- increasing independence
- learning the academic and functional skills to meet postsecondary goals
- eliminating barriers to employment and community access
- fading school supports while developing natural/paid supports

Special Education students ages 18-22 who completed credit requirements for the Foundation High School Program and received modified content in one or more courses for graduation credit and whose ARD Committee determines that the student requires continued support to meet transition needs in order to meet the requirements of graduation under TEC, §89.1070 can be considered for 18+ services.

SUMMARY OF PERFORMANCE

A Summary of Performance is required by IDEA 2004 for each student before termination of eligibility due to graduation from secondary school with a regular diploma, or due to exceeding age eligibility for a free appropriate public education. This Summary of Performance shall provide the student with a summary of the student's academic achievement and functional performance, which shall include recommendations on how to assist the student in meeting the student's postsecondary goals.

The Summary of Performance, with accompanying documentation, is important to assist the student in the transition from high school to postsecondary education and/or employment. The information is intended to help postsecondary institutions consider accommodations for access.

The Summary of Performance must be completed during the final year of a student's secondary education. The timing of completion may vary depending on the student's postsecondary goals. If a student is transitioning to higher education, the Summary of Performance may be necessary as the student applies to a college or university. Likewise, this information may be necessary as a student applies for services from state agencies such as Health and Human Services. In some instances, it may be most appropriate to wait until the Spring of a student's final year to provide an agency or employer with the most updated information on the performance of the student; however, the Summary of Performance must be completed and presented at the student's graduation ARD, but no later than the last student school day.

EXTENDED SCHOOL YEAR

Extended School Year (ESY) services are defined as individualized instructional programs beyond the regular school year for eligible students with disabilities. Federal and state laws provide for the following:

The need for ESY services must be determined on an individual student basis by the ARD Committee. In determining the need for and in providing ESY services a school district may not:

- Limit ESY services to a particular category or disability; or
- Unilaterally limit the type, amount, or duration of ESY services.

The need for ESY services must be documented from formal and/or informal evaluations provided by the district or the parents. The documentation shall demonstrate that in one or more critical areas addressed in the current IEP objectives, the student has exhibited, or reasonably may be expected to exhibit, severe or substantial regression that cannot be recouped within a reasonable period of time. Severe or substantial regression means that the student has been, or will be, unable to maintain one or more acquired critical skills in the absence of ESY services.

The reasonable period of time for recoupment of acquired critical skills shall be determined on the basis of needs identified in each student's IEP. If the loss of acquired critical skills would be particularly severe or substantial, or if such loss results, or reasonably may be expected to result, in immediate physical harm to the student or to others, ESY services may be justified without consideration of the period of time for recoupment of such skill. In any case, the period of time for recoupment shall not exceed six to eight weeks.

A skill is critical when the loss of that skill results, or is reasonably expected to result, in any of the following occurrences during the first eight weeks of the next school year:

- Placement in a more restrictive instructional arrangement;
- Significant loss of acquired skills necessary for the student to appropriately progress in the general curriculum;
- Significant loss of self-sufficiency in self-help skill areas as evidenced by an increase in the number of direct service staff and/or amount of time required to provide Special Education or related services;
- Loss of access to community-based independent living skills instruction or an independent living environment provided by non-educational sources as a result of regression in skills; or
- Loss of access to on-the-job training or productive employment as a result of regression in skills.

ESY is an agenda item for all Annual ARDs. If the district does not recommend ESY services at the annual review of a student's IEP, the parent may request that the ARD Committee reconsider and parent information should be duly considered. Additionally, if ESY services are not recommended at the time of the Annual ARD but appear to be indicated at a later date, an ARD Committee meeting should be held to address the possible need for services.

If a student for whom ESY services were considered and rejected loses critical skills because of the decision not to provide ESY services, and those skills are not regained after the reasonable period of time for recoupment, the ARD Committee shall reconsider the current IEP if the student's loss of critical skills interferes with the implementation of the IEP.

For students enrolling in the district during the school year, information obtained from the prior

school district as well as information collected during the current school year may be used to determine the need for ESY services. The provision of ESY services is limited to the educational needs of the student and shall not supplant or limit the responsibility of other public agencies to continue to provide care and treatment services pursuant to policy or practice, even when those services are similar to, or the same as, the services addressed in the student's IEP. No student shall be denied ESY services because the student receives care and treatment services under the auspices of other agencies. Districts are not eligible for reimbursement for ESY services provided to students for reasons other than those listed above.

Responsibilities of Special Education Teachers Recommending ESY

Teachers will be required to provide documentation on all students being recommended for ESY. Students should not be recommended for ESY until this documentation is completed. The documentation must show:

- The critical skill areas addressed in the **current** IEP in which the student has exhibited or may reasonably be expected to exhibit severe or substantial regression that cannot be recouped within a reasonable period of time (not to exceed six to eight weeks).
- The anticipated result of loss of skills, if ESY services are not provided.

Students should not be recommended for ESY services before documentation is completed. Please contact the Special Education office to discuss potential ESY candidates in order to ensure data supports the need for services and collaborate on the programming/planning for services.

In order to document the need for ESY, Special Education students should be monitored closely, particularly following absences and holidays such as the Summer break, Thanksgiving break, Christmas break and Spring break. If skills are lost that cannot be recouped within a reasonable period of time (not to exceed six weeks), the student will be eligible for ESY services. Each case must be considered individually. Teachers should not recommend a related service for ESY, but rather should coordinate with the related service provider regarding related services for ESY. The related service provider must document the need for ESY.

The completed Documentation of Student Progress on the ESY Supplement in eSped is to be reviewed with the ARD Committee at the Annual ARD. ESY is addressed at the Annual ARD. If ESY was not initially recommended but is later determined to be appropriate, a review/revision ARD can be held to address this (must be completed by the 1st week of May).

STATE AND/OR DISTRICT-WIDE ASSESSMENT

The current Texas assessment program reflects the rigor of the Texas Essential Knowledge and Skills (TEKS) curriculum and also speaks to include as many students as possible in the State of Texas Assessments of Academic Readiness (STAAR). The STAAR includes five end-of-course (EOC) assessments for grades 9-12. All students have the right to be exposed to as much of the TEKS curriculum as possible so that they can reach their academic potential. For students receiving Special Education services, curriculum and testing decisions lie with the ARD Committee. The ARD Committee must weigh the benefits of rigorous and challenging

expectations with the possibilities of success, given each student's individual strengths and needs.

Keeping high standards in mind, ARD Committees must choose the assessment that matches the educational needs of each individual student receiving Special Education services. ARD Committees should high expectations in determining the annual goals documented in the student's IEP. It is important to emphasize that the instructional decisions made by the ARD Committee and documented in the IEP must always guide assessment decisions.

At the earliest possible date, each campus will be provided with information developed by the Texas Education Agency that provides guidance to ARD Committees explaining:

- How to make decisions about a student's placement in the Texas Assessment Program by using the TEKS curriculum as documented in the student's IEP,
- How to determine which of the accommodations documented in the IEP are appropriate and allowable for the assessments.

ARD Committee members must have an understanding of the ARD Committee decision-making process. It is the responsibility of Special Education personnel to ensure that all ARD Committee members have access to current information.

ACCELERATED INSTRUCTION (AI)/ INTENSIVE PROGRAM OF INSTRUCTION (IPI)

Texas law 19 TAC §104.1001 requires all students who do not achieve approaches or higher on STAAR grades 3 through 8 or EOC assessments must be provided accelerated instruction. These requirements, modified by House Bill 4545 of the 87th legislature and recently updated with the passage of House Bill 1416 in the 88th legislature, provide that qualifying students must be:

Assigned a TIA designated teacher for the subsequent school year in the applicable subject area;

OR

Provided supplemental instruction aligned with the research on high impact tutoring in the TEKS for the applicable grade levels and subject area in the following manner:

- No less than 15 or 30 hours depending on student performance and is provided in the summer or at least once per week in the school year;
- Limited to two subjects per year, prioritizing math and RLA;
- Provided in a group of no more than four students, unless the parent or guardian of each student in the group authorizes a larger group;
- Designed to assist the student in achieving satisfactory performance in the applicable grade level and subject area and includes effective instructional materials designed for supplemental instruction;
- Provided by a person with training in the applicable instructional materials for the supplemental instruction and provided by one person for the entirety of their accelerated instruction.

The subjects and grade levels applicable to students receiving accelerated instruction who do not achieve approaches or higher are STAAR grades 3–8 (math, RLA, science, social studies) and STAAR EOC (Algebra I, English I, English II, Biology, U.S. History). Students who fall into the "Low Does Not Meet" category of STAAR performance are required to receive no less than 30 hours of supplemental instruction. Incoming fourth-grade students who do not approach grade level or higher on a grade 3 STAAR are required to receive 30 hours of supplemental instruction. The district will develop an accelerated education plan when a student fails to achieve approaches or higher on STAAR for two or more consecutive school years in the same subject area. The accelerated education plan must 1) identify the reason the student did not perform satisfactorily on the applicable assessment; and 2) require that the student be provided with no less than 30 hours of supplemental instruction for each consecutive school year in which the student does not perform satisfactorily on the assessment in the applicable subject.

The ARD committee must review the student's participation and progress at the student's next annual review meeting. An ARD committee may be convened if the committee believes that a student's IEP may need to be modified based on the accelerated and supplemental instruction requirements. For the ARD committee to determine that a modification to a student's IEP is necessary, it must document that participation in such instruction would significantly affect the LEA's provision of a free appropriate public education (FAPE) to the student. This circumstance would be highly unusual and not recommended except for rare cases, as the accelerated and supplemental instruction requirements are targeted to the Texas Essential Knowledge and Skills (TEKS) to help the student achieve satisfactory performance in the applicable grade level and subject area. Modifying the requirements solely to fit within the student's existing schedule, for example, would not be considered a significant interference with the provision of FAPE and should not be used as the reason for modification. In instances where the ARD committee determines that a modification is necessary, the committee must document this decision along with the rationale behind the modification.

A parent may elect to modify or remove a requirement for the instruction under these requirements by submitting a written request to the administrator at the campus in which the student is enrolled. In order to request the change in requirements, the student must have been administered and failed to perform satisfactorily on a STAAR assessment or was administered a beginning-of-year assessment instrument aligned with the essential knowledge and skills for the subject area and grade level in which the student failed to perform satisfactorily.

HB 1416 (88R) does not require students who were administered STAAR Alternate 2 to adhere to the requirements of Section 28.0211.

Intensive Program of Instruction

An Intensive Program of Instruction (IPI) per TEC §28.0213 is a program of instruction for any student, grades 3-12, who did not perform satisfactorily on STAAR 3–8, EOC assessments or STAAR Alternate 2, as well as high school students who are at risk of not graduating within four years. An IPI is intended to enable a student to attain a standard of annual growth on the basis of that student's IEP, and if applicable, carry out the purposes of AI. Where the IPI includes AI, requirements for the provision of the AI also apply. However, the law is silent on how an IPI should be designed and documented. ARD committees should always consider the disability-related needs of a student, as described in their IEP, to ensure that the student receives a FAPE.

Create an IPI as soon as possible upon determining the student was unsuccessful in one or more areas of the state assessment or upon determining that the student is not likely to receive a high school diploma before the fifth school year following the student's enrollment in ninth grade. Describe the IPI the student will be provided to address areas of need for each assessment where the student did not perform satisfactorily, including the frequency, duration, and location of the delivery of the IPI and the staff members responsible for carrying out the plan. HB 1416 Frequently Asked Questions

CHILD FIND/REFERRAL

It is the duty of each education agency to ensure that **all** children (birth through age 22) with disabilities who are in need of Special Education and related services are identified, located, and evaluated. This includes children with disabilities attending home and private schools, regardless of the severity of the disability. Students who reside in Uvalde CISD but attend public schools outside of the district boundaries must be evaluated pursuant to 34 CFR 300.131(a).

Children suspected of having a disability and a need for Special Education services must be evaluated prior to the consideration of Special Education services. School personnel who suspect any child between the age of birth and five (5) years, and **not yet enrolled** in school, of having a disability and a need for Special Education services should assist the parent/guardian in contacting the Special Education office.

Referral of enrolled students for a Full and Individual Initial Evaluation (FIIE) and possible consideration of Special Education services shall be a part of the district's overall general education referral or screening system. Prior to referral, students experiencing difficulty in the general classroom should be considered for all support services available to all students, such as tutorial, remedial, compensatory, response to scientific, research-based intervention, and other academic or behavior support services. Parents have the right to request a Special Education evaluation at any time. The district must respond to a written request for evaluation to a campus administrator or the Director of Special Education, within 15 school days either agreeing or refusing to evaluate. Conversely, the district evaluation team member (School Psychologist, Diagnostician, SLP) must send a Notice in Regards to the Provision of FAPE/Reading Willing and Able notice if a parent or guardian has not responded to the opportunity to sign consent. This must be sent by the 15th school day of no response. While a district could determine that an evaluation is not appropriate, this is very rare. The Special Education Director must be contacted before notifying any parent of a refusal to provide an initial evaluation. For students being evaluated; if a student has three or more absences during the referral timeline, the due-date for the evaluation is adjusted for each absence. Calculation and documentation of those absences is completed by Special Education Department Staff utilizing the district's software management system.

Response to scientific, research-based intervention (RtI) is based upon a tiered model of intervention and should be available to struggling students. RtI is referred to as a Multi-tiered

System of Supports (MTSS) in UCISD.

- Tier 1 interventions are implemented in the child's general education classroom, on a strong core curriculum, and may include the use of one or more research-based interventions and the use of accommodations.
- Tier 2 interventions occur in addition to all Tier 1 interventions and may include the addition of alternate research-based interventions, smaller groups of students, increased instructional time, and should occur on a regular schedule for multiple weeks.
- Tier 3 interventions are in addition to all Tier 1 and Tier 2 interventions and may include increased frequency of existing Tier 2 research-based interventions or individual delivery of instruction.

Each campus has a general intervention team that reviews progress and recommends intervention strategies. If a student does not make sufficient progress in the general classroom after the provision of high-quality interventions that are delivered with fidelity, the team may refer the student for a FIIE. The referral for a FIIE may be initiated at any time by the intervention team or the student's parents or legal guardian.

A student may have a disabling condition, yet be ineligible for Special Education services due to the absence of a need for Special Education services (specially designed instruction). Generally, if a student is achieving satisfactory progress in his/her educational program and is able to access educational opportunities, there is not a need for specially designed instruction. Therefore, a child achieving satisfactory progress in the general education program would likely not be considered eligible for Special Education services.

NEW REFERRALS

Referral

Each campus has a committee that reviews the instructional program, interventions, and progress of struggling students. Following careful review, the committee may determine that a referral to Special Education for a Full and Individual Evaluation (FIIE) is appropriate. Children referred to Special Education should be suspected of having a disability and demonstrate a need for Special Education services. Generally, if a child is achieving satisfactory progress in his/her educational program, an educational need for Special Education services does not exist, and the provision of Special Education services is not indicated.

Evaluation

The Special Education teacher's first awareness of a new referral may be at the time an appraisal staff member informs the Special Education teacher that a child may qualify for Special Education services, and an ARD meeting is being scheduled.

The Special Education teacher, speech pathologist, and/or related service provider will have access to the FIE by 11:59 p.m. on the day the evaluation is due. The Special Education teacher assigned to the student will use the FIE to complete the Present Levels of Academic Achievement and Functional Performance (PLAAFP) in eSped for each area of significant deficit. Draft/proposed goals and objectives, classroom accommodations, and STAAR testing proposals are also the responsibility of the Special Education teacher and should be completed prior to the

ARD committee meeting. A draft copy should be sent home at the same time as the invitation to the initial ARD or as soon as possible.

DYSLEXIA

Evaluation for dyslexia and dysgraphia have recently moved to a single pathway for identification under the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA). This change means that anytime the campus suspects that the student has dyslexia or a related disorder and may need dyslexia intervention services, the campus must seek parental consent for a Full Individual Initial Evaluation (FIIE) under the IDEA.

For students receiving direct dyslexia instruction under IDEA, the teacher providing the dyslexia instruction is a required member of the IEP/ARD committee. The IEP/ARD committee must include documentation of appropriate specialized reading instruction on the student's IEP and the dyslexia supplement completed.

Please refer to the Dyslexia Handbook for more detailed information.

IEP DEVELOPMENT - INITIAL ARDS AND SUBSEQUENT ANNUAL REVIEWS

Complete the following steps to develop an IEP*:

The case manager will determine the student's Present Levels of Academic Achievement and Functional Performance (PLAAFP) using data from various sources. These may include the FIE as a primary source for initial ARDs. For subsequent Annual Review ARDs, the information from the re-evaluation/FIE may be used but is not sufficient or necessary for an annual update of the PLAAFP. General education teacher reports, state and local assessment data, reports provided by the parent, reports from Related Services and/or Instructional Support Services, etc., will be the bulk of the PLAAFP. The PLAAFP will be the starting point from which the goals and objectives will be developed and progress will be measured.

**Note: All IEPs must be developed based on data. If you are having difficulty obtaining baseline data, contact the Special Education Office for data collection tools or appropriate related services providers for assistance.*

Document the PLAAFP in eSped.

1. Write IEP goals and objectives (objectives may not always be needed) based on the information documented on the PLAAFP form and in collaboration with additional implementers (e.g., Related Services, Instructional Support providers, etc.).
2. Document the IEP goals and objectives using eSped.

Send a draft copy of the IEP goals to the parent/guardian 3-5 days prior to the ARD.

ARD Committee Meeting

In the case of an initial ARD, after all testing is complete and the evaluation and IEP are drafted,

an ARD Committee meeting will be held. Annual Review ARDs occur yearly thereafter. The campus staff designee is responsible for coordinating with all required members for scheduling the meeting. The same staff member will complete the invitation to the ARD committee meeting to send to parent/guardian/adult student. Notification of the meeting must be sent to the parent and all appropriate school personnel must be notified so they can plan to attend the meeting.

At the ARD meeting, the responsibilities of the Special Education teacher include:

- Being prepared to report on PLAAFP.
- Present status report, including information from general education teachers.
- Present proposed STAAR testing recommendations and accommodations which you have already entered into eSped.
- Report on proposed goals.
- Have a draft schedule of services to propose.
- Address AI/IPI for students who did not pass STAAR.

WHEN TO SCHEDULE ARD MEETINGS

Parents, teachers, ARD Facilitators, School Psychologists, Diagnosticians, SLPs, related service providers, students, and administrators can request an ARD Committee meeting at any time. ARD Committee meetings should be scheduled to address a student's instructional needs and programming, student progress, state/district assessments, and transition.

If a parent or teacher expresses concerns regarding the proper implementation of an IEP developed by an ARD Committee, the parent or teacher should be directed to the campus administrator. The ARD Committee does not have the authority to evaluate the job performance of an individual teacher. Only the campus administrator has that authority.

If a parent requests an ARD committee meeting, district personnel should inform parents of the functions of ARD committees and the circumstances or types of problems for which requesting an ARD committee meeting would be appropriate. If the parent requests a meeting the District must schedule an ARD committee meeting or request mediation from the Texas Education Agency. There are recent provisions for district response to parent requests for excessive ARDs (weekly for example) that can be considered. Refer to the Special Education Director for more information.

ARD Committee meetings must be held for the following reasons:

Initial Placement:
An ARD Committee meeting must be held within 30 calendar days of the date of the Full Individual Initial Evaluation (there are special rules when the consent for evaluation was obtained late in the school year). The assessment staff will prepare, schedule initial ARDs and coordinate with the campuses to arrange the participation of the special education teacher, general education teacher, and administrator. The ARD Notice will be sent by the campus Special Education representative.

Transfer ARDs:

When a student enrolls at a campus and the parent/guardian indicates the student was receiving Special Education services at the previous school district the campus will complete a Gray Form and send it to the Special Education Office the same day. The Special Education office will notify the appropriate lead assessment staff and schedule a Transfer ARD with the campus within 5 school days providing comparable to those described in the child's ARD from the previous district. Within 15 school days once services have been verified by the Special Education Office the campus a permanent placement ARD will be held for the student. The campus will add the student to their ARD schedule and the Special Education Office will add the student to the Master ARD schedule.

Annual Review ARD:

Each campus responsible for initiating an ARD meeting for the purpose of developing, reviewing, and revising the ARD for each Special Education student at least annually. The annual review ARD meeting must be held each year prior to the anniversary date. If an Initial or Annual ARD occurs in the Fall, prior to October 1st, an additional Annual ARD must be held prior to the end of the school year. This is in order to ensure that the ARD committee assembled for the student is knowledgeable about the student's strengths and needs. While the second Annual ARD needs to be held prior to the end of the school year, it does not have to be in late Spring. It is advisable to conduct this second Annual at any time that a Review ARD for the student is needed for some reason (review schedule, failing grades, change a related service, add new goals, or other change to the IEP that requires an ARD). The second Annual ARD for a student with an Annual ARD prior to October 1st could be held any time after the first semester.

Adding/Deleting a Related Service:

An ARD committee meeting must be held before a related service is added to or deleted from a student's schedule. The related service provider is responsible for alerting the Special Education teacher and/or campus ARD scheduler that a change in regards to the provision of FAPE is being recommended and an ARD committee meeting will be scheduled. The related service provider will complete relevant notices in the ARD documentation.

Schedule (instructional arrangement) change:

An ARD Committee meeting must be held before changing a Special Education student's Special Education time, unless at the most recent ARD Committee meeting, the committee specified conditions to allow a schedule change without another meeting.

Discipline:

If a student is removed from his/her IEP placement for 10 or more cumulative school days, an ARD Committee must meet for a Manifestation Determination meeting. An FBA may also need to be conducted.

Attendance:

If a Special Education student is not in compliance with attendance policies, the campus compulsory attendance procedures should be followed, including court action as provided by law. An ARD Committee meeting should be scheduled if absences are interfering with the student's ability to obtain educational benefit from the educational program determined by the ARD

Committee.

Accommodations changes:

Parent, administrator, and Special Education representative must approve any additions or deletions of accommodations/supports in an IEP Amendment. If parent or other members do not agree to the change, an ARD Committee meeting must be held.

Preparing for Annual Meetings:

In order for ARD meetings to be completed within an appropriate time, it is essential that the necessary pre-planning and preparation be accomplished. Use the ARD Checklist which follows as a guide when preparing for ARD Committee meetings.

ARD Meeting Checklist Please follow all campus procedures put in place by your administrators regarding what needs to be turned in prior to the ARD meeting, who will schedule the ARD meeting and send notices.

Case Manager Duties:

(1) Collect teacher/staff input using a Google Form or a chosen method: Gen Ed – classroom teacher, ESL, etc.
(2) Ensure any other related service providers know the ARD is coming up and are on the calendar invite
(3) FIE (if applicable) - Read and review FIE to develop PLAAFPs, updated goals, and recommendations. Teacher information will be included in the FIE. Continue to collaborate with the teacher for further recommendations when building the IEP.
(4) Special Ed Teachers (if needed): Begin scheduling a staffing with all service providers/nurse (if needed), roughly 3 weeks before ARD.

Complete the following required ARD Documents in the "Draft" file in eSped:

- PLAAFP: Describe student strengths and weaknesses in each area of the PLAAFP.
- Write measurable goals and objectives to reflect weaknesses in PLAAFP (Measurable Annual Goals screen in eSped).
- Complete accommodations using the "Accommodations List" screen (both classroom and STAAR) screens in eSped *at least one day before ARD*.
- Come to the ARD prepared to speak to schedule recommendations.
- Complete "State/District Assessment Results" screen by entering district MAP scores (a screenshot can be entered into the text box) and manually entering or uploading STAAR scores (they can be found on Eduphoria).
- AI/IPI – Upload any STAAR scores and fill out information for Accelerated Instruction and Intensive Program of Instruction related to HB 1416

STAAR/district assessment decisions: Come to the ARD prepared with recommendations and supporting documentation for testing and necessary accommodations and have these proposals entered into the STAAR section.

- Complete STAAR ALT Supplement in eSped, *if applicable*
- Complete the TELPAS screen, making sure to add accommodations (if applicable to

student)

- Complete the Personal Care Services in eSped, *if applicable (Most students that need this filled out will be receiving medically necessary services that we track and can receive money for through SHARS. If you aren't sure about this, please ask your Team Lead.)*
- Complete/update the BIP, *if applicable* (please reach out to your Behavior Specialist if applicable)
- Complete Individualized Health Plan (for students who receive nursing services), *if applicable*, by gathering information from the school nurse, and invite the school nurse if needed.
- Conduct transition assessment for the appropriate grade-level (6th-12th, 18+) with teacher/student/parents, complete transition screens and write post-secondary goals for students at the annual ARD that they turn 14.
- Complete annual progress reports needed before the Annual ARD.
- Complete the ESY (Extended School Year) Supplement, *if applicable*
    - *You should know if you have a student who will most likely need ESY. It has to be discussed at every annual ARD, but if the student has been showing regression.*
        - Complete the Autism Supplement only *applicable if the student is eligible for services as a student with AU*
        - Complete any Child Outcome Summary Form information, *if applicable* (please note that this applies to students aged 3-5 or students advancing to kindergarten from PreK) *(Please reach out to Anna Roch with questions)*
            - Entry COSFs completed and archived within 30 days of initial ARD
            - (Exit COSFs archived by the last day of school)

Send draft IEP home to parents:
(Must be sent at least 3-5 school days prior to date of ARD)
Please follow your campus procedures regarding this timeline as well

- Draft copy of proposed PLAAFPs and goals/objectives ("eStar Full ARD B - Goals and Objectives" and "Development of IEP (PLAAFP)" screens and "Print as Draft Copy")
- Let parents know they can ask you questions prior, or bring any wonderings and questions to the meeting. Parents are an equal member of the committee and should have an opportunity for meaningful input.

<u>At ARD</u>:

Case Manager:

- Review PLAAFPs
- Review IEP Progress and new proposed Goals and Objectives
- Discuss recommendations for accommodations (Including consideration of Assistive Technology--*Required*)
- Discuss recommendations for STAAR and AI/IPI plans
- If completing COSF at ARD, address any additional information needed, if applicable

<u>After ARD</u>

Within 48 hours after the ARD, will campus will update their ARD schedule indicating has been completed and archived.

The Case Manager will:

- Create new Special Education Bundle
- Upload the documents to Branching Minds and send an email to the teachers to review the updated paperwork and replace the old bundle with the new.
- If the student has a BIP include administrators and transportation on the email.
- Within 2 days the Case Manager will check in Branching Minds to make sure all teachers have reviewed the bundle.

Prep for Revision ARD

Case Manager:

1. Revisions to the current IEP will be made within the "Active" file in eSped.
2. Revisions will depend on the purpose of the Revision ARD. If you are adding new goals and discontinuing others, do not delete the previous goals. Rather, on the Progress Report, indicate that the goal has been "Discontinued".
3. If the ARDF is not in attendance at the ARD meeting, send the completed documentation on the Revision ARD form, signature page, and signed notice (if applicable) within 1 day so they can complete the paperwork in a timely manner.

Send draft IEP home to parents (if new goals are being proposed/significant changes to other portions of the IEP):

(Must be sent at least 3-5 school days prior to date of ARD)

- Draft copy of PLAAFPs and proposed goals/objectives (ARD Forms: eSped Full ARD B—Goals and Objectives)
- Attach your conference period and contact information to the draft PLAAFPs and IEP Goals/Objectives, Let parents know that they can contact you if they have any questions.

Prep for Initial ARD

Case Manager: Read and review FIE to determine if there are potential programming needs that would need proposal, determine who would need to attend a staffing, schedule a campus staffing prior to initial ARD (Note: this would be an appropriate time to include a district specialist or coordinator in the conversation) Collect teacher/staff/parent input

FIE- Read and review FIE to develop PLAAFPs and recommendations; teacher and parent information will be included in the FIE. Continue to collaborate with the teacher and parent for further recommendations when building the IEP.

- Gen Ed – PDI, classroom teacher, subject areas teachers, essential areas, electives, etc.
- Special Ed – PDI providers, Speech, OT, PT, VI, AT, O&M, AI

Call a staffing, as needed, with the other service providers. Complete the following required ARD Documents in the "Draft" file in eSped:

- PLAAFP: Describe student strengths and weaknesses in each area of the PLAAFP.
- Write measurable goals and objectives to reflect weaknesses outlined in PLAAFP (eSped: ARD Forms: Measurable Annual Goals).
- Complete accommodations on the "Accommodations List" screen (both daily and STAAR) screens in eSped *at least one day before ARD*. Note: STAAR accommodations should also be listed in classroom accommodations.
- STAAR/district assessment decisions: Come to the ARD prepared with recommendations and supporting documentation for testing and necessary accommodations.
- Complete the BIP, if applicable. (Contact your behavior specialist with questions)
- Complete any other supplemental forms, i.e. personal care, health plan etc

Inform administration of recommendations for schedule of services and goals and objectives. *(Must be sent at least 3-5 school days prior to the date of ARD.)* You must inform your administration of any recommendations for placement or staffing well in advance of the initial ARD so this can be proposed to the necessary district stakeholders. It is important to have individualized conversations based on data with the entire convened committee without predetermining placement or staffing, as well.

IEP Start Dates:

The start date for all the new IEP goals will be 5 school days after the current annual ARD meeting date, unless waived by the parent. This will also be the date on the PEIMS form. The end date will continue to be the same; one school day before the current annual ARD meeting date of the following year. For example, if the current annual ARD date is 9-6-25, the start date for the goals will be 9-13-25 and the end date will be 9-5-26.

There will be situations when the 5 days will be waived by the parent. This happens occasionally in initial ARD meetings. The ARD Facilitator has agreed to take responsibility for changing the start date on the goals when that is the case.

The primary purpose of the annual ARD Committee meeting is to review current progress and to plan for the upcoming IEP year.

Complete the Present Levels of Academic Achievement and Functional Performance in eSped and follow the procedures for developing a draft IEP. Be prepared to discuss the student's PLAAFP as a basis for the IEP.

- Be realistic as to what can be accomplished in a year. Students in classrooms using an alternative curriculum must have at least two objectives for each goal. Usually no more than five objectives per goal are appropriate. You will need to be discriminating in choosing the appropriate objectives. Students in an inclusion setting may need only a goal or two (and appropriate transition goals beginning prior to age 14). Objectives are not required for students expected to master the general curriculum.
- For all students, it is the responsibility of the Special Education case manager

to gather input from the general education teacher(s) to present at the ARD Committee meeting. Special Education case managers should request information about the student's progress, the effectiveness of the accommodations that have been in place and recommendations for the upcoming IEP year at least two weeks in advance of the ARD Committee meeting.

- Notify the Speech Therapy, Related Service, and/or the Instructional Support provider about the meeting date and time at least two weeks prior to the meeting (if appropriate).
- At an Annual Review ARD, review the previous year's IEP, reporting progress and the dates skills were mastered.
- Bring a hard copy of the student's schedule, grades, and transcript (if applicable). When the ARD Committee is planning for the next school year, be prepared with appropriate schedule options, prerequisites, campus bell schedule, and any other information that is necessary to plan an appropriate schedule.
- Advise regular teachers (who will be attending the ARD) what information they should bring to the ARD:
    - Information from report cards, grade books, etc.
    - Documentation of the effectiveness of past strategies/accommodations
    - Work samples
    - Specific concerns

If you have not heard from the parent(s), follow up the ARD notification with a note or phone call to establish whether or not the parent(s) will attend, or if the ARD can be held without their attendance. If the parent(s) is unable to attend, ask him/her if there are any concerns they would like brought before the committee. Document this phone call and bring the information to the ARD.

PRESENT LEVELS OF ACADEMIC ACHIEVEMENT AND FUNCTIONAL PERFORMANCE (PLAAFP)

Present Levels of Academic Achievement and Functional Performance, or PLAAFP, is the term used to describe the skills a child has acquired at the time of IEP development. The PLAAFP should be comprehensive enough to not only describe a child's present status, but also to indicate areas of need to be addressed in the IEP. PLAAFPs are to be completed for each area of need. PLAAFP statements must include an impact statement.

The electronic PLAAFP in eSped should be completed prior to every Annual ARD Committee meeting. Following each annual ARD Committee meeting, the PLAAFP, along with the schedule page, accommodations, BIP (if applicable), and any pertinent information from the deliberations, is distributed to each of the child's classroom teachers.

The PLAAFP form requires documentation of academic achievement as well as speech/language,

social/behavioral, intellectual/cognitive, pre-vocational/vocational, and physical/medical information. Sources of data used to complete this page may include:

- Standardized testing (Woodcock-Johnson, etc.)
- State assessment (STAAR, etc.)
- Informal tests (teacher made tests)
- Criterion referenced tests (Brigance, etc.)
- Benchmark tests
- Full Individual Evaluation
- Released State assessments
- Work samples
- Information from speech and/or related service providers
- Information from the parent
- Information from the student
- Information from classroom teachers

The PLAAFP also includes documentation of pre-academic development and life skills. Sources of data used to complete this page may include:

- Full Individual Evaluation
- Criterion referenced tests (Brigance, etc.)
- Informal tests (teacher made tests)
- Work samples
- Information from speech and/or related service providers
- Information from the parent
- Information from the classroom teacher(s)
- Information from the school nurse (if there is a medical diagnosis)

ARD COMMITTEE ATTENDANCE

IDEA 2004 specifies the required members of the IEP Team. In Texas, there are additional requirements and this team is referred to as the Admissions, Review, and Dismissal (ARD) Committee. The ARD Committee means a group of individuals composed of:

- The parents of the child with a disability who, if neither parent can attend the ARD meeting, may participate through individual or conference phone calls or other means agreed upon by the parent and the local education agency;
- Not less than one regular education teacher of such child (if the child is or may be participating in the regular education environment);
- Not less than one Special Education teacher, or where appropriate, not less than one

Special Education provider of such child who, as a member of the ARD Committee, to the extent appropriate, participates in the development, review and revision of the IEP, including the determination of appropriate positive behavioral interventions and supports and other strategies for the child and supplementary aids and services, program modifications and supports for school personnel;

- A representative of the local education agency who is:
    - Qualified to provide, or supervise the provision of, specially designed instruction to meet the unique needs of children with disabilities;
    - Knowledgeable about the general education curriculum; and
    - Knowledgeable about the availability of resources of the local education agency;
- An individual who can interpret the instructional implications of evaluation results and who may be one of the other members;
- Other individuals who have knowledge of or special expertise regarding the child, at the discretion of the parent or the agency;
    - Including related services personnel as appropriate; and
    - Including, in the case of a child who was previously served under ECI, at the request of the parent by invitation to the initial ARD meeting, the ECI service coordinator or other representatives of the ECI system to assist with the smooth transition of services
- The child with a disability, whenever appropriate and when the purpose of the meeting will be the consideration of the transition services.
- For a child who is deaf or hard of hearing (D/HH) including deaf-blindness, a teacher who is certified in the education of children with auditory impairments (who is also the case manager if D/HH only);
- For a child with a visual impairment including deaf-blindness, a teacher who is certified in the education of children with visual impairments (who is also the case manager if VI only);
- For a child with limited English proficiency, a member of the language proficiency assessment committee (LPAC) when determining participation in Statewide Assessments, to address the child's language needs; and
- When considering initial or continued placement of a student in career and technology education (CTE), a representative from CTE, preferably the teacher.

NOTE: If an ARD Committee member is serving in a dual capacity, that person should sign the ARD document in both places. Dual roles in ARD Committee meetings are allowable in only specific cases. Confirm it is allowable with Special Education staff.

<u>Provisions in place to allow a required member not to attend an ARD meeting:</u>

An ARD Committee member is not required to attend (in whole or in part) if:

- The parent and the local education agency agree:
    - The member's attendance is not necessary; and
    - The member's area of curriculum or related services is not being modified or

discussed in the meeting; and
- The parent's agreement is in writing.

Complete the eSped document if the ARD Committee member is not required to attend.

An ARD Committee member is excused from attending (in whole or in part) if:

- The meeting involves a modification to or discussion of the member's area of the curriculum or related services;
- The parent and the local education agency consent to the excusal;
- The parent's consent is in writing; and
- The member submits in writing to the parent and the ARD Committee input into the development of the IEP prior to the meeting.

Complete the eSped document if the ARD Committee member is excused.

ADMISSION, REVIEW, AND DISMISSAL COMMITTEE MEETING AGENDA

1. Introductions
2. Confirmation that all required members are present
3. Purpose of the ARD
4. Eligibility
5. Assessment (review/request)
6. PLAAFP (Strengths and weaknesses - how their disability impacts them) a. Academic: Normative evaluations, STAAR testing, CBAs/benchmarks, Teacher information
   b. Related/Other Services (OT, PT, D/HH, VI, Counseling)
   c. Behavior Concerns
   d. Functional
   e. Transition
7. Transition Supplement
8. Review progress on current IEP
9. Develop/present proposed IEP goals and objectives
10. Statement: Do we think these goals are appropriately ambitious? Are the objectives going to be challenging for this student?
11. Schedule (current year/next year) with services' recommendations
12. Accommodations and/or Modifications
13. Assistive technology 14.District testing
15. State STAAR Testing (IPI and AI)
16. LEP (TELPAS)

17. ESY
18. Supplements, if appropriate
19. Special Transportation
20. Parent Concerns
21. Assurances/Confidentiality Statement
22. Obtain any consent(s) needed

IEP AMENDMENTS AND REVISION ARDs

IEP Amendments

IEP Amendments are not ARD Committee meetings. This is often a preferable method for documenting small changes to the IEP such as adding an accommodation or changing transportation.. While this option allows us to make many changes without actually meeting in an ARD, there are three main caveats:

1. It must be allowable by law. *Note: There are only three areas that cannot be done through the IEP Amendment process - eligibility determination, changes in placement, and manifestation determinations.*
2. It must meet district policy.
3. The parent must agree with the "Amendment" process.

The process we will follow includes the following steps:

1. Contact your administrator and/or the Special Education office with the purpose of the change request. They verify if the "amendment" is appropriate for your request.
2. Contact the parent with the recommended "changes" or "amendments". Along with the change, please describe the "amendment" process, including that they would be waiving their 5 days notice. Document the contact in the contact log in eSped. *Note: if the parent does not agree, or if you cannot reach them, we must schedule an ARD.*
3. After obtaining parent permission to proceed with the "amendment" complete the IEP Amendment Screen in eSped. Be sure to include the two required signatures: the Special Education teacher and campus administrator/ARD Facilitator.
4. After obtaining signatures, archive the amendment and send a copy to the parent via the Portal.
    a. For a review that all elements are correct before archiving, you may ask your campus administrator or the Special Education office.
    b. If it is a change that Gen Ed teachers need to be aware of, please make a new bundle for Branching Minds and send out notifications.

***Question**: A 4th grade student receives 60 minutes of reading resource and the discussion is around pushing him into general ed for 30 minutes of that time 3 times a week and seeing how it goes before making any official changes to the IEP? What if the special ed teacher and gen ed teacher want to "trial" this student in a different environment? The parent agreed over the phone*

when the special ed teacher called her.

Answer: Any time a "trial" is being discussed where a student's environment is changing, it's considered a change in placement. This has to be either approved by the ARD Committee officially or by the IEP Amendment agreed to and signed by the parent indicating the period that this change will occur (ex. "*We will utilize the new schedule for the next 3 weeks until October 13, 2099. Should change become official, a review ARD will be scheduled*."). Verbal agreement isn't enough. With only verbal agreement, it could be argued that the district changed the student's placement without the parent's involvement if the parent changed their mind or forgot about the conversation. It's always best to get it official.

***Question**: What if the parent wants to meet or what if the proposed change results in an instructional arrangement change (change of placement to or from resource)?*

Answer: If the parent wants to meet when you contact them to discuss the Amendment process, a Review ARD will need to be held. After the ARD is held, the Case Manager will document the changes in eSped and distribute the document. School Psychs will not generally attend review ARDs unless assessment is being addressed. Related service members can be invited if their services or schedule will be discussed, but they would not be required. Dyslexia teachers are not required unless the schedule changes revolve around that service.

***Question**: What if the proposed change results in an instructional arrangement change (change of placement to or from resource)?*

Answer: If the student needs more or less time in Special Education, a Review ARD will need to be held. After the ARD is held, the Case Manager will document the changes in eSped and distribute the document. School Psychs will not generally attend review ARDs unless assessment is being addressed and won't need to be invited. Related service members can be invited if their services or schedule will be discussed, but they would not be required. Dyslexia teachers are not required unless the schedule changes revolve around that service.

If you have any questions, please ask your administrator, the Special Education office.

Revision ARDs If the parent wants to meet, or if other IEP changes/discussion are needed, a Revision ARD must be held. For Revision ARDs, just like IEP Amendments, the ARD Facilitator/Administrator will generate a signature page and provide the ARD checklist. After the ARD is held, the Case Manager will document the changes in eSped and distribute the document. The School Psychologist/Diagnostician will not generally attend revision ARDs unless assessment is being addressed.

AUTISM SUPPLEMENT

Texas regulations (TAC 89.1055) require ARD committees to, at least annually, consider eleven strategies for students with autism. Schools must consider these strategies based on peer-reviewed, research-based educational practices to the extent practicable. While all eleven strategies must be considered annually, it is not required that all be implemented. However, if an ARD committee determines one or more of these strategies are not needed, the IEP must include the basis upon which the determination was made.

Each strategy discussion should begin by reviewing current assessments and data, as all considerations and decisions should be data-driven; furthermore, if an intervention has already been attempted, analyzing the data on progress can be particularly beneficial. Decisions on the inclusion or exclusion of each strategy are made by an ARD committee during the ARD committee meeting, rather than by any one individual at the meeting. Documentation that the ARD committee considered the need for each of the 11 strategies should be included in the IEP, and for each strategy that is needed, the ARD committee must address it in the IEP, including the basis for each decision.

The 11 strategies are as follows:

1. **Extended Educational Programming:** extended educational programming (for example: extended day and/or extended school year services that consider the duration of programs/settings based on data collected related to behavior, social skills, communication, academics, and self-help skills);
2. **Daily Schedule:** daily schedules reflecting minimal unstructured time and active engagement in learning activities (for example: lunch, snack, and recess periods that provide flexibility within routines; adapt to individual skill levels; and assist with schedule changes, such as changes involving substitute teachers and pep rallies);
3. **In-Home Training (IHT) and Community-Based Training (CBT):** in-home and community-based training or viable alternatives that assist the student with acquisition of social, behavioral, communication, and self-help skills (for example: strategies that facilitate maintenance and generalization of such skills from home to school, school to home, home to community, and school to community);
4. **Positive Behavior Support Strategies:** positive behavior support strategies based on relevant information, for example:
    a. antecedent manipulation, replacement behaviors, reinforcement strategies, and data-based decisions; and
    b. a behavioral intervention plan developed from a functional behavioral assessment that uses current data related to target behaviors and addresses behavioral programming across home, school, and community-based settings
5. **Futures Planning:** beginning at any age, futures planning for integrated learning and training, living, work, community, and educational environments that considers skills necessary to function in current and post-secondary environments, including self-determination and self-advocacy skills;
6. **Parent/Family Training and Support:** parent/family training and support, provided by qualified personnel with experience in autism, that, for example:
    a. provides a family with skills necessary for a student to succeed in the home/community setting;
    b. includes information regarding resources (for example: parent support groups, workshops, videos, conferences, and materials designed to increase parent knowledge of specific teaching/management techniques related to the student's curriculum); and
    c. facilitates parental carryover of in-home training (for example: strategies for behavior management and developing structured home environments and/or communication training so that parents are active participants in promoting the continuity of interventions across all settings);
7. **Suitable Staff-to-Student Ratios:** suitable staff-to-student ratio appropriate to identified

activities and as needed to achieve social/behavioral progress based on the student's developmental and learning level (acquisition, fluency, maintenance, generalization) that encourages work towards individual independence as determined by, for example:
   a. adaptive behavior evaluation results;
   b. behavioral accommodation needs across settings; and
   c. transitions within the school day;
8. **Communication Interventions:** communication interventions, including language forms and functions that enhance effective communication across settings (for example: augmentative, incidental, and naturalistic teaching);
9. **Social Skills Supports and Strategies:** social skills supports and strategies based on social skills assessment/curriculum and provided across settings (e.g., peer-based instruction and intervention, video modeling, social narratives, and role playing);
10. **Professional Educator/Staff Supports:** professional educator/staff support (for example: training provided to personnel who work with the student to assure the correct implementation of techniques and strategies described in the IEP);
11. **Teaching Strategies:** teaching strategies based on peer reviewed, research-based practices for students with autism (for example: those associated with discrete-trial training, visual supports, applied behavior analysis, structured learning, augmentative communication, or social skills training).

DISCIPLINE

In the case of a child whose behavior impedes his or her learning or that of others, the ARD committee, in developing the child's IEP, shall consider strategies including behavioral interventions and supports to address that behavior. If the ARD committee determines that such services are needed, they must be added to the IEP, and they must be provided. Use of restraining and time-out must be in accordance with the Texas Education Code 37.0021 and 19 T.A.C. 89.1053

If the district initiates disciplinary procedures applicable to all students, the district shall ensure that the Special Education and disciplinary records of the student with a disability are transmitted for consideration by the person or persons making the final determination regarding disciplinary action.

When a principal or other appropriate administrator recommends disciplinary removal from the student's current IEP placement, a change of placement analysis should be conducted.

To conduct a change of placement analysis:

1. Count the days of disciplinary removal from the student's current educational placement.
   a. Portions of the school day that the child had been suspended would be included in determining whether the child had been removed for more than 10 cumulative school days or subjected to a change of placement.
   b. An in-school suspension would not be considered a part of the days of suspension as long as the child is afforded the opportunity to:

i. Appropriately progress in the general curriculum,
ii. Continue to receive the services specified on his or her IEP,
iii. And continue to participate with nondisabled students to the extent they would have in their current placement.

c. Whether a bus suspension would count as a day of suspension would depend on whether the bus transportation is a part of the child's IEP. i. If the bus transportation is a part of the child's IEP, a bus suspension would be treated as a suspension unless the district provides the bus service in some other way.

ii. If the bus transportation is not a part of the child's IEP, a bus suspension would not count as a day of suspension.

2. Determine whether the disciplinary removal(s) constitute(s) a change of placement. A disciplinary change of placement occurs if:
   a. The removal is more than 10 consecutive school days; **or**
   b. The student has been subjected to a series of removals that constitute a pattern:
      i. Because the series of removals total more than 10 school days in a school year;
      ii. Because the student's behavior is substantially similar to the student's behavior in previous incidents that resulted in the series of removals; **and**
      iii. Because of such additional factors as the length of each removal, the total amount of time the child has been removed, and the proximity of the removals to one another.
3. If the disciplinary removal(s) constitute(s) a change of placement, the district must:
   a. Provide the parent with the Procedural Safeguards document on the date on which the decision is made to make a removal that constitutes a change of placement;
   b. Schedule an ARD Committee meeting to conduct a Manifestation Determination within 10 school days of any decision to change the placement; and
   c. If the student has been removed from his/her placement for more than 10 days, return the student to the IEP placement ASAP.
4. If the disciplinary removals do not constitute a change of placement, conduct a short term removal analysis as follows:
   a. If the short term removal is for 10 cumulative school days or less:
      i. A school district need not provide services during periods of removal to a student with a disability who has been removed from his or her current placement for 10 school days or less in that school year if services are not provided to a student without disabilities who has been similarly removed.
      ii. In the case of a student whose behavior impedes his or her learning or that of others, convene an ARD Committee meeting, if appropriate, to consider strategies and supports, including positive behavior interventions, to address the behavior.

Central Office Special Education staff are available to provide support for personnel for students with discipline/behavior issues.

DISTRICT ALTERNATIVE EDUCATION PLACEMENT (DAEP) AND EXPULSION GUIDELINES

DAEP PLACEMENT

A student with a disability may not be placed in an AEP (Alternate Educational Placement) solely for educational purposes. The student must have engaged in misconduct warranting AEP placement and *is entitled to all due process afforded to a student who does not have a disability accused of the same conduct.*

PLACEMENT EXCEEDING 10 DAYS:

If a student with a disability is being considered for placement in an AEP for longer than 10 school days, the following steps must be followed:

1. All procedural safeguards afforded a student without a disability must be followed:
2. The parent/adult student must be provided the Notice of Procedural Safeguards on the date on which the decision was made to make a removal that constitutes a change of placement.
3. An ARD committee must consider all relevant evaluation and diagnostic information, relevant information supplied by the parent(s), observations of the student, and the student's IEP and placement.
4. The ARD committee must then consider the following questions to determine whether or not ADP placement is appropriate for this student and what services are needed to provide a FAPE (free appropriate public education).
    a. Was the conduct in question the direct result of the local educational agency's failure to implement the IEP? (If yes, the student may not be placed in the AEP.)
    b. Was the conduct in question caused by, or have a direct and substantial relationship to, the student's disability? (If yes, the student may not be placed in the AEP unless the parent/adult student and the district agrees.)

REMOVAL FOR WEAPONS OR DRUGS OFFENSES: School personnel may order a student with a disability to an appropriate AEP for the same amount of time that a child without a disability would be subject to discipline, but for not more than 45 **school** days, if:

- The student carries or possesses a weapon to or at school, on school premises, or to or at a school function under the jurisdiction of a State or local education agency;
- The student knowingly possesses or uses illegal drugs, or sells or solicits the sale of a controlled substance, while at school, on school premises, or at a school function under the jurisdiction of a State or local education agency; or
- The student has inflicted serious bodily injury* upon another person while at school, on school premises, or at a school function under the jurisdiction of a State or local education agency. 20 U.S.C.1415 (k)(1)(G).

***** Serious bodily injury is bodily injury which involved:

1. A substantial risk of death;
2. Extreme physical pain;
3. Protracted and obvious disfigurement; or

4. Protracted loss or impairment of the function of a bodily member, organ, or mental faculty. 20 U.S.C. 1415(k)(7)(D) and 18 U.S.C. 1365(h)(3).

STAY PUT AND DUE PROCESS

The parent of a child with a disability who disagrees with any decision regarding placement or the manifestation determination, may request a hearing. When a hearing is requested by the parent:

1. The student shall remain in the interim alternative educational placement (AEP) pending the decision of the hearing officer or until the expiration of the time period provided for, whichever occurs first, unless the parent and the local education agency agree otherwise, and
2. The State or local education agency shall arrange for an expedited hearing, which shall occur within 20 school days of the date the hearing is requested and shall result in a determination within 10 school days after the hearing.

EXPULSION OF A STUDENT WITH A DISABILITY

Under IDEA, the student with a disability must be provided a free and appropriate public education regardless of placement. Expulsion is a change in placement with all services intact. Contact the Special Education Director immediately if a student is being considered for expulsion.

GUIDELINES FOR WRITING A BEHAVIOR INTERVENTION PLAN USING POSITIVE BEHAVIORAL SUPPORTS

The function of the behavior should be considered when writing Behavior Intervention Plans (BIPs). If a teacher feels a formal Functional Behavioral Assessment (FBA) may be needed, the Special Education teacher should request/set up an ARD committee meeting to request assessment and obtain consent. The FBA will be completed by the Behavior Specialist. Use the FBA as a road map to write the BIP.

The FBA will include:

- Identified behavior problems for the student
- Antecedents [what happens before the problem behavior(s)]
- Consequences [what happens after the problem behavior(s)]
- Purpose/Function (the theory identifying the purpose of the behavior(s); i.e., attention, escape/avoidance, control, self-regulation, play, etc.)

Writing a BIP is simply making a plan to support the student in learning and using a more acceptable way to behave in order to get his/her needs met. When making a plan:

1. Identify the more appropriate behavior or replacement behavior that you want the student to increase. The replacement behavior should serve the same purpose for the student that the problem behavior did. For example: If the student talks out in class to gain the teacher's attention, the replacement behavior is using a non-verbal signal to gain the teacher's attention. Both behaviors enable the student to gain the teacher's attention.
2. Provide the student with positive supports.

   Choose strategies that include the following elements:

Teaching Strategies

- Teach the skills needed to be able to use the replacement behavior.
- Teach rules.
- Model everything you teach.
- Give practice opportunities.
- Teach the student to deal with settings, events, places, and situations where the behavior is most likely to occur.

Antecedent Strategies

These are strategies designed to **prevent** the behavior problem from occurring. Change the situations (who-what-when-where) that seem to be associated with The problem behavior. For example**:** Change the classroom arrangement, the curriculum, and the assignment. Change the way the instruction is presented or who interacts with the student.

Consequence Strategies

These are **positive reinforcers** that follow a student's attempt to use the more appropriate **replacement** behavior**.** These include the identification of reinforcers that will be used when the student exhibits the replacement behavior, and when and how the reinforcers will be earned and exchanged.

Reacting Strategies

How will you react when the problem behavior occurs? These are strategies to identify ways to react that will not "feed into" the student's inappropriate patterns of behavior. Identify ways to react that will decrease stress and not act as a punishment.

3. Identify a data collecting procedure that includes a method of collecting data, a statement of when data will be reviewed, and a description of changes made in the BIP.

Consider realistic strategies for measuring behavior.

1. Keep it simple.
2. Consider times and conditions where measurement would be meaningful and realistic.

TIME-OUT

According to Texas Education Code (TEC); Texas Penal Code; 19 Texas Administrative Code (TAC) Chapter 89 Time Out is a management technique and/or discipline management practice must be implemented in such a way as to protect the health and safety of the student and others. No discipline management practice may be calculated to inflict injury, cause harm, demean, or deprive a student of basic human necessities.

A school employee, volunteer, or independent contractor may use time-out as a behavior management technique to provide a student with an opportunity to regain self-control, in a setting:

- That is not locked; and
- From which the exit is not physically blocked by furniture, a closed door held shut from the outside, or another inanimate object.

Use of time-out is subject to the following limitations:

- Physical force or threat of physical force shall not be used to place a student in time-out.
- Time-out may only be used in conjunction with an array of positive behavior intervention strategies and techniques and must be included in the student's IEP and/or BIP if it is utilized on a recurrent basis to increase or decrease a targeted behavior.
- Use of time-out shall not be implemented in a fashion that precludes the ability of the student to be involved in and progress in the general curriculum and advance appropriately toward attaining the annual goals specified in the student's IEP.

Documentation and data collection regarding the use of time-out, if any, must be addressed in the IEP or BIP. The ARD committee must use any data collected to judge the effectiveness of the intervention and provide a basis for making determinations regarding its continued use.

Aversive Techniques

Texas Education Code / Sec. 37.0023

- Prohibit aversive techniques on students in Special Education
- "Aversive technique" means a technique or intervention that is intended to reduce the likelihood of a behavior reoccurring by intentionally inflicting on a student significant physical or emotional discomfort or pain.
- Prohibits:
    - Electric shock
    - Pressure points, joint locks
    - Noxious, toxic, or unpleasant spray or mist
    - Denial of sleep, food, air, water, bedding, restroom, physical comfort, shelter, supervision
    - Ridicule or demean student which affects learning or mental health or constitutes verbal abuse
    - Use of device, material, or object which simultaneously immobilized all four extremities including prone or supine floor restraint
    - Impairing student's breathing by applying pressure to the torso or neck; or obstructing the airway by covering mouth or nose
    - Restricting circulation
    - Securing student to stationary object while student is sitting or standing ○ Inhibit or hinder student's ability to communicate
    - Chemical restraint
    - Timeout that precludes student from involvement and progress in required curriculum and IEP progress
    - Deprives use of one or more senses.

SB 1707

School district peace officers, SRO, or security personnel only handle law enforcement issues, not routine campus discipline.

Behavior Incident Documentation

Us a Behavior Incident Documentation screen in eSped to provide a consistent communication platform with the most reliable data while simultaneously allowing parents the opportunity to fully understand the behavior incidents and, importantly, the actions taken in response.

The form will be completed by the case Case Manager and should be provided to the parent by the second school day after the behavior occurred. Any parent/guardian questions or clarifications regarding the specific incident can be answered by the administrator.

This form, along with an explanatory letter to parents, is sent to the parent/guardian of the student and maintained in the student's Special Education records as behavioral data. It is not utilized as documentation for any other student(s), if involved.

CARE

Definition: A positive, campus-wide inclusive behavior model to support students exhibiting serious behavior challenges. This model is designed to support Special Education students with chronic/intense problem behaviors that require more intensive interventions and supports. It provides a way to individually teach and practice replacement skills and coping strategies. CARE utilizes collaborative, creative problem-solving for academic and behavioral success.

Purpose: To provide a behavior support component to enhance and teach social and behavioral skills. The goal of the program is for a student to learn to take ownership of his/her choices by demonstrating prosocial replacement behaviors and coping skills, resulting in the development of socially accepted and independent adaptive skills. The continuum of behavior support may range from behavioral accommodations within the general education classroom to intensive services delivered in a self-contained classroom.

Student Criteria:

1. Data indicating that the student would be unsuccessful without additional support.
2. Evidence that student specific replacement behavior interventions (i.e., BIP, accommodations, behavioral supports/strategies) have been previously implemented with fidelity and have been unsuccessful, as documented through data.
3. Prior consultation with CARE/Behavior Support Staff/Appraisal Staff.

IEP Documentation:

1. Need for CARE support is evidenced (through data) in the PLAAFP.
2. IEP accommodations for behavior should be considered.
3. IEP goals for targeted behaviors have been developed from the data based PLAAFP

specifically identifying the replacement and adaptive skills.

4. The student's IEP must include a Behavior Intervention Plan (BIP) for targeted behaviors indicating positive behavioral strategies.
5. Description of CARE support documented in IEP.
6. Frequency and duration of services documented in IEP.

Priority Subjects: Student's IEP is implemented throughout the educational day because severity of behaviors interferes with all learning across all contexts.

Priority Tasks:

1. Direct instruction of social skills taught and reinforced consistently as per IEP.
2. Implementation of all behavior strategies as outlined in the student's BIP.
3. Data collection of replacement and adaptive skills recorded weekly.
4. Collaboration with educational support staff.

Staff/Structure Requirements:

1. Highly qualified teacher certified in Special Education.
2. Highly qualified teacher(s) in all core subject areas when teaching students in self-contained settings.
3. Collaboration with staff include, but are not limited to, administration, grade level team, general education teacher, CARE teacher, paraprofessionals, speech, counselor, OT, PT, behavior specialists, and appraisal staff.

Prioritized Recommendations:

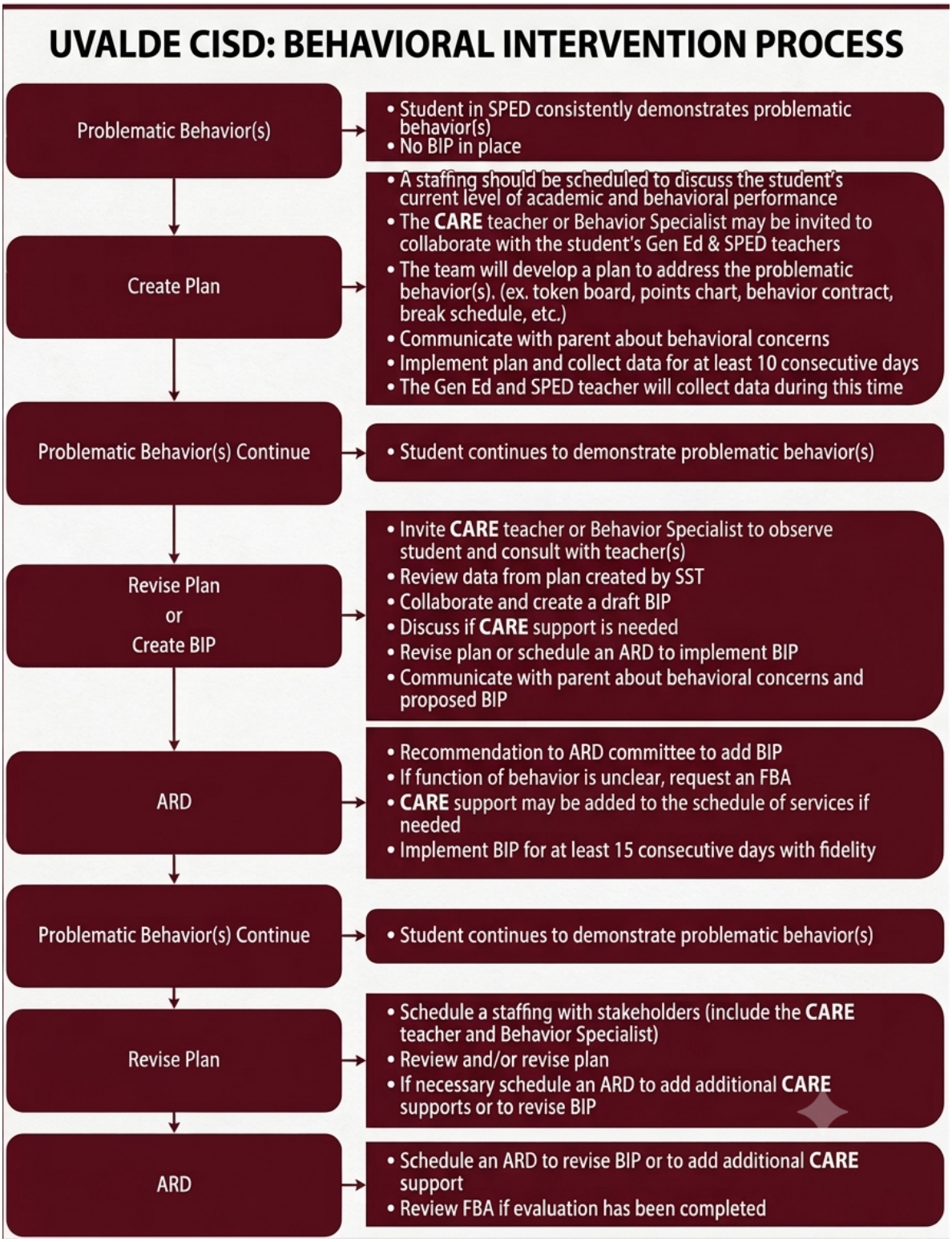
1. Collect data on target behaviors, replacement/adaptive skills, and behavior goals.
2. Make recommendations based on data driven decisions.
3. Professional development for CARE teacher and para in the areas of evidence based strategies and data collection.

Individualize the provision of services based on each student's need.

CARE staff monitor student progress on a daily basis. At times, students may require additional time to de-escalate and may be required to spend the remainder of a class period or school day in the CARE room. CARE staff will determine the extent of support necessary prior to returning to class based upon individual student needs.

An ARD meeting should be scheduled if the problematic behaviors are a significant safety issue (harm to self or others) in order to consider all resources and discuss the continuum of services.

CARE Support Determination



This is a living document and may be revised as needed to reflect updates to Texas Education Agency (TEA) guidance, Texas Association of School Boards (TASB) policy recommendations, applicable law, and Uvalde CISD procedures.

CARE classroom

To ensure that students with a disability receive a Free Appropriate Public Education (FAPE) as mandated by the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA), each Local Education Agency (LEA) must ensure that a continuum of services is provided. As part of UCISD's responsibility to provide FAPE, the CARE classroom has been created to address the needs of students with challenging behaviors that are high in frequency, duration, intensity, and/or the student is considered a danger to self or others.

The CARE a Special Education service that provides intensive specialized instruction in a self-contained classroom and other less restrictive environments to increase academic functioning, prosocial behavior, and emotional well-being of students. Its purpose is driven by three main goals:

1. Prepare students for becoming lifelong learners and contributing members of society.
2. Foster students' self-esteem and ability to build and maintain interpersonal relationships.
3. Increase students' academic competence by increasing their behavioral readiness for learning.

Students receiving specialized instruction in the CARE classroom will be served by a highly qualified teacher and staff in a therapeutic environment that utilizes behavior supports and trauma-informed care as a framework for changing behaviors.

Placement in the CARE classroom is an ARD Committee decision. When a campus is recommending that the student receive services in the CARE classroom it is a decision that should be considered after other less intensive and/or restrictive supports and services have been implemented with fidelity. The CARE classroom is a restrictive setting in the continuum of services provided by the district, and placement decisions should be made with supporting data documenting other interventions or settings that have shown to be unsuccessful.

Phases of the CARE Program

Phase 1: Acquisition

- Teach the rules and expectations of the program
    - Student receives daily targeted social skills instruction
    - Student receives academic instruction in the CARE setting

Phase 2: Proficiency

- Student receives weekly targeted social skills instruction
- Student learns to self-monitor their behaviors
- Student receives academic instruction in the CARE setting

This is a living document and may be revised as needed to reflect updates to Texas Education Agency (TEA) guidance, Texas Association of School Boards (TASB) policy recommendations, applicable law, and Uvalde CISD procedures.

Phase 3: Generalization

- Student receives weekly targeted social skills instruction
- Student demonstrates the ability to demonstrate the taught skills appropriately
- Student begins inclusion in their general education classes.
- Student continues to receive academic instruction in the CARE setting as needed

SPECIAL EDUCATION HOMEBOUND OVERVIEW

The intent of Special Education Homebound (SEH) is to continue the education of students with severe medical issues or illnesses that prevent them from receiving instruction in the school setting totaling at least 4 weeks, as documented on the district supplement form by a physician licensed to practice in the United States. If a parent requests homebound services provide the Homebound form from eSped for the physician to complete. Once the parent completes the form with the physician's signature send it to the Special Education office for processing. Once the need for homebound services are verified an ARD will be scheduled.

To be placed in the Special Education homebound instructional setting, a student aged six years or older must meet the following four criteria:

- The student is eligible for Special Education and related services as determined by an ARD committee.
- The ARD committee has received medical documentation that the student is expected to incur full-day absences from school for a minimum of four weeks for medical reasons, which can include psychological disorders. The weeks need not be consecutive. The medical documentation must be provided by a physician licensed to practice in the United States.
- When determining whether to approve this placement, the ARD committee must review documentation related to anticipated periods of confinement to the home, as well as whether the student is determined to be chronically ill or have any other unique medical circumstances that would require the placement in order to provide a free appropriate public education (FAPE) to the student.
  Medical documentation does not guarantee the placement, as the student's ARD committee must determine whether the placement is necessary to provide FAPE. If so, the ARD committee will determine the amount of services to be provided to the student at home.

Special Education Homebound placement may be available to all students eligible for Special Education under IDEA. SEH procedures are designed to allow a student to receive instruction while recovering at home or undergoing medical treatment. When designing a homebound plan, consideration is given to both the student's academic needs and health concerns. The student's ARD committee shall determine the amount of services to be provided to the student in this instructional arrangement in accordance with Federal and state laws, rules, and regulations. Homebound placement is highly restrictive and should only be considered when campus-based alternatives have been tried and are not successful. In most cases, the homebound services will be provided by a certified Special Education teacher. If a student does not require specialized instruction or modified/alternate curriculum, consideration can be made for a certified general

education teacher with no certification in Special Education.

General Guidelines and Responsibilities:

- The Admissions, Review, and Dismissal (ARD) Committee determines what instruction might need to be provided as well as the number of hours per week of homebound instruction. The Homebound Teacher coordinates with the parent to schedule time for services each week.
- A designated teacher(s) on the student's home campus is responsible for providing lesson plans and instructional materials that will be picked up by the homebound teacher at least weekly. This teacher should be able to answer any questions about the instructional program of the student.
- The campus teachers are responsible for assigning grades and sending out report cards and/or progress reports. The homebound teacher will provide the classroom teacher with information to assist in grading and reporting progress.
- The homebound teacher will submit attendance to the home campus PEIMS clerk. One hour of homebound instruction equals one full school day, up to four hours. Four hours per week equals 5 school days.
- The UCISD SPED Homebound Teacher should be invited to all ARDs in which homebound will be discussed.

Attendance: If a homebound instructional lesson is missed because the student is unavailable, the homebound teacher should report a student absence to the PEIMS clerk. If a session is missed because the homebound teacher is unable to attend, then a session must be made up within five school days and the student is counted present for that session.

RELATED SERVICE GUIDELINES

The term related services means ". . . transportation and such developmental, corrective, and other supportive services as are required to assist a child with a disability to benefit from Special Education, and includes speech-language pathology and audiology services, interpreting services, psychological services, physical and occupational therapy, recreation, including therapeutic recreation, early identification and assessment of disabilities in children, counseling services, including rehabilitation counseling, orientation and mobility services, and medical services for diagnostic or evaluation purposes. Related services also include school health services and school nurse services, social work services in schools, and parent counseling and training (IDEA Section 300.34 Related Services)."

Once a student meets eligibility requirements as a student with a disability (in accordance with 34 C.F.R.§§ 300.304-300.311 and 34 C.F.R. § 300.8) and qualifies for Special Education and related services with an educational need (20 U.S.C. §§ 1414(a)(1)(A) and (b)(4), and 34 C.F.R. §§ 300.301(a) and 300.306), the student then qualifies for **all** Special Education and related services.

Service options to consider:

1. Special Education (specially designed instruction [34 C.F.R. §300.39(b)(3)] which involves

adapting the "content, methodology, or delivery of instruction." It may include accommodations (how a child learns) or modifications (what a child learns).

2. Supplementary aids and services (34 C.F.R. §300.42) aids, services, and other supports needed to support the child to participate with non-disabled peers to the greatest extent possible which may include accommodations.
3. Related services (34 C.F.R. §300.34) support services provided when **needed** to assist the child to benefit from Special Education.

Program Modifications of Supports for School Staff [34 C.F.R.§300.320(a)(4)].

The question to respond to in a related service evaluation is, "Does the student **'need'** the additional support of the related service to receive a free and appropriate public education in the least restrictive environment?"

Education Based Model to Determine if a Child Requires Related Services to Benefit from Special Education:

1. Is the child currently "benefiting from Special Education"?
   a. What is the educational program and curriculum (e.g., the demands on the student)?
   b. What special education supports are in place (e.g., co-teaching, modifications)?
   c. Are the supports meeting the student's educational needs (e.g., level and type appropriate)?
2. If not, what is the barrier that is limiting the child's current or potential benefit from the program? Is it a barrier that would be best addressed by the Related Service as a least restrictive support?
   a. If yes, what strategies and solutions (based on evidence) can the Related Service offer the student, the teachers, and others?
   b. Is the Related Service provider's expertise required (based on evidence) to provide the necessary support
   c. If yes, what intensity of services is needed from the Related Service (e.g., time, frequency, duration, location)?

LEAs are responsible for identifying, locating, and evaluating all students who are potentially eligible for Special Education and related services. (34 C.F.R. §300.111). The request for evaluation for a related service may occur as part of an initial Full and Individual Evaluation or after a student has been found eligible for Special Education and related services but is not benefitting from their Special Education program and the expertise of that Related Service provider may be needed to address barriers and provide strategies and solutions. A request for evaluation should be addressed at ARD. *Prior to ARD,* the Special Education case manager should coordinate the request for a related service after consulting with the campus appraisal person. Parents must be given written notice of the evaluation and written consent must be obtained from the parent.

ASSISTIVE TECHNOLOGY

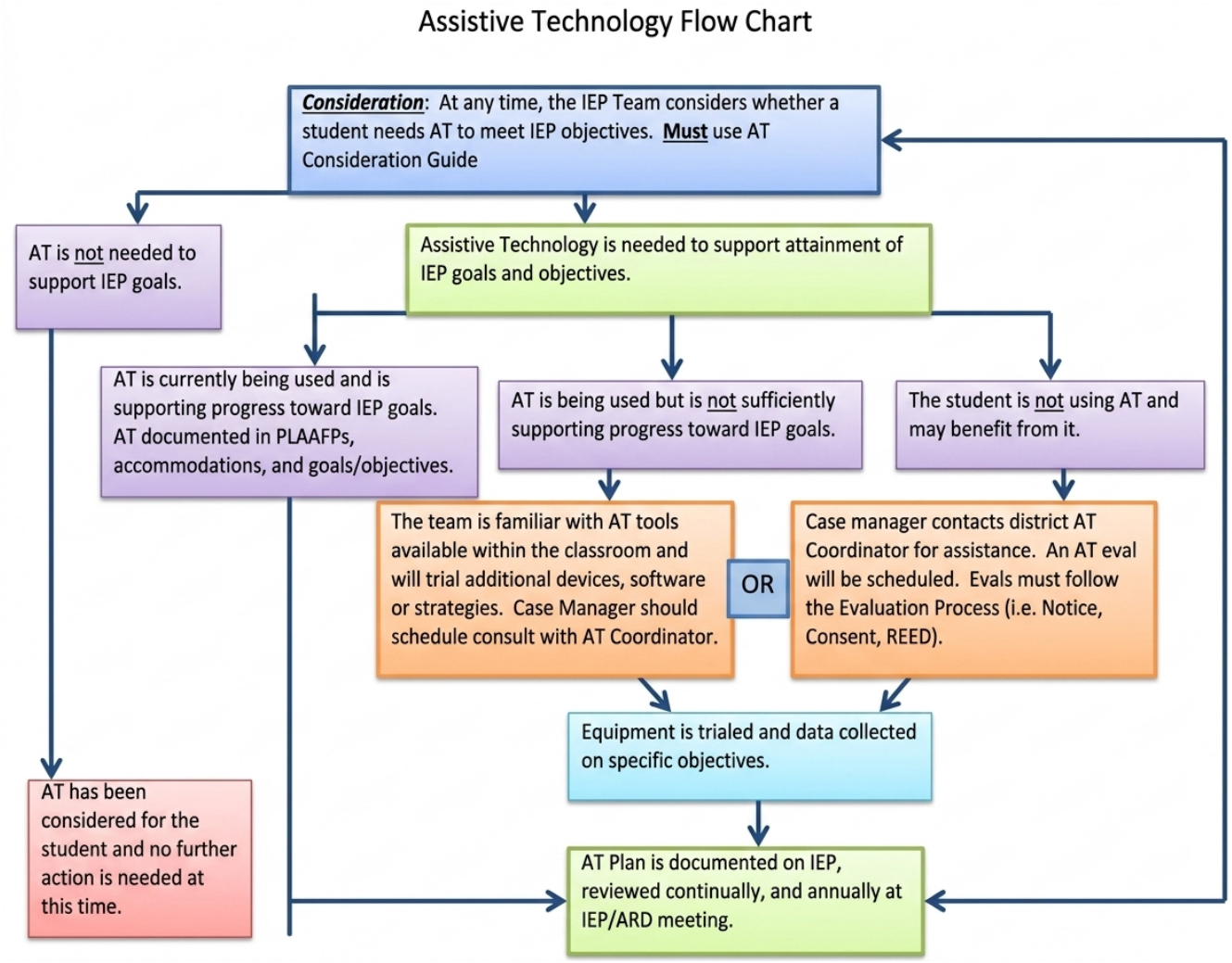
Assistive Technology devices and services should be considered for all students with disabilities regardless of type or severity of disability. Sec. 300.5 Assistive Technology Device (IDEA)

Assistive technology device means any item, piece of equipment, or product system, whether acquired commercially off the shelf, modified, or customized, that is used to increase, maintain, or improve the functional capabilities of a child with a disability. The term does not include a medical device that is surgically implanted, or the replacement of such a device. Sec. 300.6 Assistive Technology Service (IDEA).

Assistive technology service means any service that directly assists a child with a disability in the selection, acquisition, or use of an assistive technology device. The term includes:

- The evaluation of the needs of a child with a disability, including a functional evaluation of the child in the child's customary environment;
- Purchasing, leasing, or otherwise providing for the acquisition of assistive technology devices by children with disabilities;
- Selecting, designing, fitting, customizing, adapting, applying, maintaining, repairing, or replacing assistive technology devices;
- Coordinating and using other therapies, interventions, or services with assistive technology devices, such as those associated with existing education and rehabilitation plans and programs;
- Training or technical assistance for a child with a disability, or, if appropriate, that child's family; and
- Training or technical assistance for professionals (including individuals providing education or rehabilitation services), employers, or other individuals who provide services to, employ, or are otherwise substantially involved in the major life functions of that child.

Assistive Technology Flow Chart



This is a living document and may be revised as needed to reflect updates to Texas Education Agency (TEA) guidance, Texas Association of School Boards (TASB) policy recommendations, applicable law, and Uvalde CISD procedures.

ADAPTED PHYSICAL EDUCATION

What's Required

The reauthorization of the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA) requires that physical education services must be made available to every student with a disability to ensure students receive a free appropriate public education (FAPE).

What We Do

Adapted Physical Education is an instructional service provided to support UCISD's physical education program. Its purpose is to provide an individualized physical education program in which the activities and instructional strategies or procedures are adapted to the specific strengths and deficits of students with disabilities. APE is designed to address the individual needs of a student as indicated in the student's annual goals and objectives included in her/her individualized education program (IEP). Emphasis is placed on age-appropriate activities for achievement of physical, social, and cognitive development toward a wholesome lifestyle. Each student with a disability must be afforded the opportunity to participate in the general physical education program available to non-disabled students unless the student has significant deficiencies in the psychomotor areas that require specially designed physical education, as identified in the student's individualized education program (IEP).

Assessment for APE

Students being considered for Adapted PE must have an evaluation completed to determine if they qualify for this additional instructional service. The ARD Committee and/or the Special Education teacher may contact the APE Teacher to discuss their concerns.

Consult can include:

- General suggestions for teachers to implement as a strategy in the classroom or at home
- Training for school personnel on strategies to support general educational concern in the educational setting

Referral for Evaluation

If evaluation is needed, the ARD Committee will conduct a Review of Existing Evaluation Data as part of the referral. The parent will be provided a notice of evaluation and will be asked to sign consent for evaluation.

Evaluation Procedures

- Evaluation procedures are used to interpret the data collected from screening and evaluation instruments, observations, and review of records to assist the ARD/IEP Committee in determining a student's eligibility for APE services.
- An evaluation is completed within 45 school days of obtaining the parent or adult student's written consent to evaluate (with special exceptions if consent is obtained with less than 45 school days left in the school year).

- Once written parental consent has been established, the evaluator will contact the student's campus to schedule an observation to evaluate the student with the designated campus representative.
- The evaluator will assess the student to determine his/her current level of gross motor development.
- Based on the review of the evaluation data, an evaluation report will be written.
- This report includes recommendations to the ARD/IEP Committee regarding the student's eligibility for APE services and service delivery options.
- A copy of the evaluation and eligibility report will be provided to the parent, campus Special Education case manager, ARD Facilitator, and administrators prior to scheduling the ARD/IEP meeting.
- The APE Teacher will draft goals and objectives for APE based on the evaluation results.

ARD/IEP Committee Meeting Procedures

- An ARD/IEP committee meeting will be held within 30 calendar days of completion of the evaluation if services are recommended.
- Participants will review the evaluation report at the ARD/IEP committee meeting, and will be notified about the ARD/IEP committee meeting date and time.
- The ARD/IEP Committee will determine eligibility for APE services based on recommendations in the student's evaluation report and input from ARD/IEP committee members.
- If the student does not meet eligibility criteria to receive APE services, the student will remain in general physical education classes.
- The ARD/IEP Committee may make recommendations to support the student in general physical education classes.
- If the student meets eligibility criteria to receive APE services, the ARD/IEP
- Committee will determine:
    - The service delivery model,
    - The location, frequency, and duration of needed services, as well as,
    - Required goals and objectives.

Re-Evaluation

- Prior to a re-evaluation, prior written notice and informed written consent must be obtained from the parent.
- Re-evaluations are conducted every three years to determine continued eligibility for APE services.
- At the beginning of each school year, the APE Teacher compiles a list of students requiring re-evaluations within the school year and relays that information to the appropriate personnel.
- The current implementer of APE will review previous evaluation results, goals and

objectives, and current data from teachers.

- Once the evaluation is complete, the evaluator will provide a signed copy of the evaluation to the campus ARD Facilitator to be processed.
- The evaluator will draft the evaluation report for presentation to the ARD/IEP Committee. Based on the results of the re-evaluation, the ARD/IEP Committee will determine:
    - Present Levels of Academic Achievement and Functional Performance (PLAAFP),
    - Educational needs of the student,
    - Whether there is a continuing educational need for APE services, and
    - The appropriate service delivery model in the least restrictive environment.

Criteria for Dismissal

The student may be dismissed from APE services by the ARD/IEP Committee according to one of the following criteria:

- The student no longer meets age eligibility criteria as defined by TEA
- The ARD/IEP Committee determines the student no longer requires modifications or accommodations to benefit educationally from APE;
- The ARD/IEP Committee determines that the student no longer has an educational need for APE services;
- The student meets annual goals and objectives as stated in the IEP which may include graduation requirements for physical education of one credit;
- The ARD/IEP Committee determines physical education is inappropriate for the student because of a physical or mental condition defined by a licensed physician

UCISD APE Continuum of Services

Level 1 General Physical Education (GPE)

Student attends GPE with peers. No APE services are necessary for student success in this setting. APE teacher may meet periodically with GPE teacher to ascertain student progress and teacher concerns.

Level 2 General Physical Education with APE Guidance/Consult

- Student attends GPE with peers. APE consults with staff to monitor student progress and to address GPE concerns. Student does not receive direct service from APE.
- APE time should be listed under the Schedule of Services.
- Support may be made in the form of determining
    - curriculum adjustments,
    - activity adjustments,
    - behavior management,
    - communication skills.

Level 3 APE Direct Service in GPE

APE teacher engages in team teaching with GPE teacher or provides instruction to the student and is responsible for training support personnel. Student should have goals/objectives as well as time listed under the Schedule of Services.

Level 4 Combination of GPE and APE Direct Services

Student participates in GPE and receives at least half time but not more than three fourth time direct APE instruction outside of the GPE setting. This can be fixed or flexible schedule. Student should have goals/objectives as well as time listed under the Schedule of Services.

Level 5 Self-Contained APE with Reverse Inclusion/Partners P.E.

Student participates in APE in a self-contained setting with assistance from non-disabled peers. Non-disabled peers should be under the supervision of APE staff at all times. Student should have goals/objectives as well as time listed under the Schedule of Services.

Level 6 Self-Contained APE

Student participates in APE in a self-contained setting with students of similar ability. Student needs the assistance of an adult to participate. Student should have goals/objectives as well as time listed under the Schedule of Services.

SURROGATE PARENT CONSIDERATIONS

Surrogate Parents:

If a child has been removed from parental custody and has been in foster care for less than 60 days, a surrogate parent should be appointed for the child. All surrogate parents must be trained so please contact the Special Services office to arrange for the training. The foster parent can be designated as the surrogate parent if the foster parent has been trained or if the training occurs no later than 90 calendar days after the Assignment.

The following procedures should be followed when a child's parent(s) do not have custody or cannot be located:

1. Ask the foster parent or responsible party for a copy of any documentation indicating who has custodial rights.
2. Coordinate with the Special Services office regarding the appointment of a surrogate parent.
3. Contact the Special Services office about the need for training if the foster parent has not been trained as a surrogate parent.
4. Provide the surrogate parent with all the information (ARD notices, ARD documents, Progress Reports, Report Cards, etc.) normally provided to the Parent.

TRANSFER OF PARENTAL RIGHTS

A student with a disability who is 18 years of age shall have the same right to make educational decisions as a student without a disability, except that the school district shall provide any notice required by IDEA to both the student and the parent. All other rights accorded to parents under IDEA transfer to the student. All rights accorded to parents under IDEA transfer to students who are incarcerated in an adult or juvenile, state or local correctional institution.

At least one year before a student reaches the age of 18 years, the district must inform the student that unless the student's parent or other individual has been granted guardianship of the student under the Probate Code, Chapter XIII, Guardianship:

- The adult student will have the same right to make educational decisions as a student without a disability.
- The parental rights once accorded to the parent under the IDEA will transfer to the student upon reaching age 18, other than the right to receive any notice required under IDEA.
- Any notice required under IDEA will be provided to both the parent and adult student, unless the student is incarcerated in an adult or juvenile, state or local correctional institution.

At the time the student reaches age 18, unless the student's parent or other individual has been granted guardianship of the student under Probate Code, Chapter XIII, Guardianship, the district must:

- Inform the parent and student that parental rights have transferred to the student.
- Inform the parent and student that the adult student has the same right to make educational decisions as a student without a disability.
- Inform the parent and student that the parental rights once accorded to the parent under IDEA have transferred to the adult student.
- Inform the parent and student that any notice required under IDEA will be provided to both the parent and adult student unless the student is incarcerated in an adult or juvenile, state or local correctional institution.
- Provide contact information for the parties to use in obtaining additional information.

The notice under IDEA that is required to be given to an adult student and parents does not create a right for the parent to consent to or participate in the proposal or refusal to which the notice relates. For example, a notice of an ARD meeting does not constitute an invitation to, or create a right for the parent to attend the meeting. However, the adult student or the school district may invite individuals who have knowledge or special

expertise regarding the student, including the parent. Nothing prohibits a valid power of attorney from being executed by an individual who holds rights under IDEA.

The parent and student are also notified of alternatives to guardianship as part of the eSped documentation. The ARD Facilitator/SLP will ensure that notice of transfer of rights will occur at

least one year prior to the student turning 18. The ARD Facilitator/SLP will provide notice when the rights have been transferred (unless guardianship has been obtained). The ARD Facilitator/SLP will provide (activate) the alternatives to guardianship notices at these same times.

School personnel should not discuss the Special Education program of an adult student with the student's parent without a signed Consent for Release/Request of Confidential Information from the student.

GRADUATION - FOUNDATIONS PLAN WITH ENDORSEMENT

What is an endorsement?

An endorsement signifies college readiness. Students wishing to meet minimum admissions requirements to enter directly into an accredited Tier 1 or 2 four year university in Texas would require an endorsement.

To earn an endorsement:

- A student must earn at least 26 credits to earn an endorsement.
- A school district may define advanced courses and determine a coherent sequence of courses for an endorsement area, provided that prerequisites in Chapters 110-117, 127, and 130 of this title are followed.
- To earn an endorsement a student must demonstrate proficiency in the following.
    - The curriculum requirements for the Foundation High School Program as defined by §74.12 of this title (relating to Foundation High School Program).
    - A fourth credit in mathematics that may be selected from one full credit or a combination of two half credits from two different courses, subject to prerequisite requirements, from the following courses:
        - Algebra II;
        - Precalculus;
        - Advanced Quantitative Reasoning;
        - Independent Study in Mathematics;
        - Discrete Mathematics for Problem Solving;
        - Algebraic Reasoning;
        - Statistics;
        - a comparable Advanced Placement (AP) mathematics course that does not count toward another credit required for graduation;
        - AP Computer Science A;
        - International Baccalaureate (IB) Computer Science Higher Level;
        - Engineering Mathematics;
        - Statistics and Business Decision Making;
        - Mathematics for Medical Professionals;
        - Discrete Mathematics for Computer Science;
- Pursuant to the Texas Education Code (TEC), §28.025(b-5), after the successful completion of Algebra II, a mathematics course endorsed by an institution of higher

education as a course for which the institution would award course credit or as a prerequisite for a course for which the institution would award course credit. The Texas Education Agency (TEA) shall maintain a current list of courses offered under this subparagraph; and 19 TAC §89.1070(c)

- A student receiving Special Education services may earn an endorsement under §74.13 of this title (relating to Endorsements) if the student:
    1. satisfactorily completes the requirements for graduation under the Foundation High School Program specified in §74.12 of this title as well as the additional credit requirements in mathematics, science, and elective courses as specified in §74.13(e) of this title with or without modified curriculum;
    2. satisfactorily completes the courses required for the endorsement under §74.13(f) of this title without any modified curriculum or with modification of the curriculum, provided that the curriculum, as modified, is sufficiently rigorous as determined by the student's ARD committee; and
    3. performs satisfactorily as established in the TEC, Chapter 39, on the required end-of-course assessment instruments unless the student's ARD committee determines that satisfactory performance is not necessary.

Other Requirements of an Endorsement:

1. Completed the Foundation High School Program, with or without modifications to required curriculum.
2. Completed the additional credit requirements in math, science and elective courses required for the endorsement, with or without modifications.
3. Completed the four endorsement-specific courses, with or without modifications to the curriculum.
4. If any curriculum was modified, the student's admission, review, and dismissal committee (ARDC) has determined that the curriculum, as modified, is sufficiently rigorous.
5. Passing required EOCs or the student's ARDC has determined that the student is not required to achieve satisfactory performance on an end-of-course assessment instrument to earn an endorsement.

ARD Committee Considerations of Demonstration of Sufficient Rigor

State and federal regulations allow the IEP team / ARD committee to develop and implement a student's individualized IEP, including modifying content. If a student requires a modification of content/curriculum that significantly impacts the methodology, breadth of instruction delivered, and/or criteria for demonstration of mastery, these specially designed/modified course or courses may be appropriately ambitious and comprehensive for the student's unique circumstances but insufficiently rigorous for the purposes of conferring an endorsement.

If a student has required modified curriculum, one or more of the following would provide the ARD committee with demonstrations of rigor:

- 3 of 5 passed for the EOC/STAAR (does not include STAAR ALT)

- Evidence of successful completion for non-modified courses in consecutive years in 11th/12th grade or by senior year in the areas of modified content
- TSI college ready in reading, writing, math per modified courses currently enrolled
- College readiness scores obtained on the SAT/ACT
- MAP Results (College Readiness Projections)
- ASVAB T-Score of 50 or above (minimum score for enlistment in a military branch is 40).
- ACC TSI prepared course completed/passed
- Passed College Algebra or English (dual enrollment, etc.).

UVALDE CISD

ARD Guidance

This is a living document and may be revised as needed to reflect updates to Texas Education Agency (TEA) guidance, Texas Association of School Boards (TASB) policy recommendations, applicable law, and Uvalde CISD procedures.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

Child Find /
Referral
Student /
Parent
Relations
Why Schedule ARD or Transfer
Agreement Meetings ARD Committee
Attendance (including excusals) ARD
Committee Meetings – General
Considerations Additional
Considerations – High School ARDs
ARD Agenda
Least Restrictive Environment and the
Continuum of Service New Students
Transfer Students
Special Education Teacher
Responsibilities ARD Meeting
Checklist
Statewide and/or District Assessment
Disciplinary Removals from the Special
Education Program AEP and Expulsion
IEP Amendments and
Revision ARDs ARD
Deliberations

This is a living document and may be revised as needed to reflect updates to Texas Education Agency (TEA) guidance, Texas Association of School Boards (TASB) policy recommendations, applicable law, and Uvalde CISD procedures.

Unanticipated ARD Happenings After the ARD

Guidelines for Determining Paraprofessional Support Inclusion Classrooms

Items that are not ARD Committee Decisions

This is a living document and may be revised as needed to reflect updates to Texas Education Agency (TEA) guidance, Texas Association of School Boards (TASB) policy recommendations, applicable law, and Uvalde CISD procedures.

Child Find / Referral

It is the duty of each education agency to ensure that all children (birth through age 22) with disabilities, who are in need of Individual with Disabilities Education ACT (IDEA) services or Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act services, including dyslexia, are identified, located, and evaluated. This includes children with disabilities attending home and private schools, regardless of the severity of the disability. Uvalde CISD staff consistently and actively engage in Child Find activities in the community. Timely and meaningful collaboration with private school providers is conducted and outreach to parents and community members is ongoing. Uvalde CISD faculty and staff are trained yearly on Child Find.

School personnel who suspect any child between the age of birth and five (5) years and not yet enrolled in school, of having a disability and a need for specialized services should assist the parent / guardian in contacting the Special Services office. The parent/guardian can call 830-591-4928 or visit the district Child Find web page.

Referral of enrolled students for a suspected disability is a part of the district's overall general education referral system. Prior to referral, students experiencing difficulty in the general classroom should be considered for all support services available to all students, such as tutorial, remedial, compensatory, response to scientific research-based intervention, and other academic or behavior support services. The campus student support team can initiate a referral for special education at any time a disability is suspected. Importantly, if a parent/guardian of a child requests a special education evaluation in writing to UCISD has 15 school days to respond to the parent's request for evaluation.

UCISD utilizes a Multi-Tiered System of Supports (MTSS) which is scientific, research-bases intervention based upon a tiered model of intervention and should be available to struggling students. Tier 1 interventions are implemented in the child's general education classroom, focus on a strong core curriculum, and may include the use of one or more strategies from the Universal Design for Learning (UDL) Guidelines. Tier 2 interventions are in addition to al Tier 1 interventions and may include the addition of alternate research-based interventions, smaller groups of students, increased instructional time, and should occur on a regular schedule for multiple weeks. Tier 3 interventions are in addition to all Tier 1 and Tier 2 interventions and may include increased frequency of existing Tier 2 research-based interventions or individual delivery of instruction, as well as the use of classroom accommodations.

If a student does not make sufficient progress in the general classroom after the provision of high-quality interventions that are delivered with fidelity, a referral for the student for special education must be considered. The referral for a special education evaluation may be initiated at any time by the intervention team or the student's parents or legal guardian.

Referral for Evaluation (When should a student be referred for evaluation under IDEA or Section 504):

When a student has not made sufficient progress in the general education classroom, or when a student demonstrates characteristics of a disability, data and student information will determine the appropriate next step. The data-based discussion should include a team of knowledgeable persons, including the parents, which could result in a referral for a Special Education evaluation, Section 504 consideration, or continued participation in the tiered interventions. The team of knowledgeable persons might include:

- Parents
- Teacher(s)
- Person knowledgeable about dyslexia and its evaluation
- Person knowledgeable about special education evaluation
- Others with knowledge of a service option to be considered

The team must make data informed decisions for every student, on an individual basis, every time. All available resources and services must be considered. A student suspected of having a disability that is adversely affecting educational performance and likely needs an individualized education program that is specifically tailored to his or her unique needs should be referred for a full and individual evaluation (FIIE) under IDEA. If the team suspects that the student will respond well to general education services with accommodations, then that student may be referred for a Section 504 evaluation unless the suspected disability is dyslexia (this would be an FIE).

The Evaluation process for Section 504 referrals includes:

- Multidisciplinary Team: Evaluation is conducted by a group of knowledgeable individuals ("504 Committee"), typically including a campus administrator, teacher, counselor, and relevant specialists (e.g., school nurse).
- Broad Data Collection: Evaluation does not require formal standardized testing or a medical diagnosis. Instead, the team gathers data from multiple sources, including:
    - Classroom performance, work samples, and grades
    - Standardized test scores and attendance records
    - Teacher observations and behavioral reports
    - Medical documentation or diagnostic reports (if available)
    - Parent input and home observations

Eligibility Determination To qualify under Section 504, the committee must answer two core questions:

1. Does the student have a physical or mental impairment?
2. Does the impairment substantially limit a major life activity (e.g., learning, reading, concentrating, thinking, walking, breathing, seeing, communicating) compared to the average student of the same age?

Note: Under federal law, mitigating measures (such as medication, hearing aids, or learned strategies) cannot be considered when determining whether a substantial limitation exists.

Outcomes and Plan Implementation

- If Eligible: The 504 Committee drafts a 504 Plan outlining specific accommodations, modifications, or related services needed in the general education setting.
- If Not Eligible: The team documents the decision, provides written notice to the parents, and recommends general education supports or interventions if appropriate.
- Procedural Safeguards: Parents are informed of their right to review records, request an impartial hearing, or appeal the decision if they disagree with the outcome.

Periodic Review 504 plans and eligibility are reviewed periodically (typically annually for accommodations, with a comprehensive re-evaluation every three years or prior to any significant change in placement).

Examples of data to discuss that can help a team make decisions include:

- Comparison with grade level peers and expectations
- Universal screening and benchmarking data
- Progress monitoring intervention data
- Review reading data in comparison with learning and achievement in other academic areas
- Parent and teacher information and observation

Section 504 do not need to be referred for an FIIE under IDEA. All students receiving interventions should be subject to ongoing progress monitoring and data-based decision making. If an individual student is making adequate progress with current services, it is unlikely that they would require special education services, and an evaluation under the requirements of IDEA would not apply. If, however, a student is not responding to the Section 504 services as expected, a referral for a special education evaluation may be necessary.

Special Circumstances

In rare circumstances a student with an obvious disability (FLS, DHH, VI etc.) and need for specialized instruction may enroll in school, but have no current paperwork indicating that this is a student who requires special education services. When district staff identify a potential need during a student interaction, they must complete the following actions on the same day:

- Issue the Notice of Evaluation
- Request Consent for Evaluation

Student/Parent Relations

Student Relations:

- All special education processes should be student centered.
- Students should be encouraged to attend ARD Committee meetings beginning no later than 6th grade and are required to be invited and/or otherwise participate in the IEP development for the ARD prior to turning 14 years of age. To discuss postsecondary transition services.
- When students are present, always speak to the student, not about the student.

- Encourage students to express their opinions and to become self-advocates.

Parent Relations:

- Effective parent-school relationships are conducive to student success. Work toward positive relationships with parents.
- As a licensed/certified professional you make determinations about student disabilities and the functional implications of the disabilities. Parents of students with disabilities are often sensitive about their child's disability and functional abilities. Keep your reports, your demeanor, and your actions professional. Avoid jargon and use language that the parent can readily understand.
- Disagreements regarding the district's evaluations and/or your recommendations should be treated in an objective manner.
    - Offer parents a 10-day recess if there is a disagreement about ARD Committee decisions.
    - Provide parents with written documentation (Notice of Decision) as soon as possible after an ARD Committee meeting ends with the parent(s) in disagreement.

NOTE: If the ARD committee meeting runs longer than planned or if the parent or a required member has to leave, this is a recess for scheduling. The 10-day recess provision is not invoked if you are rescheduling for this reason. However, all efforts should be made to hold the ARD as quickly as is mutually agreeable.

Why Schedule ARD or Transfer Meeting

Parents, teachers, students, related service providers, and administrators can request an ARD Committee meeting at any time. ARD Committee meetings should be scheduled at a mutually agreeable time to address a student's instructional needs and programming, student progress, state/district assessments, and transition.

If a parent or teacher expresses concern regarding the proper implementation of an IEP developed by an ARD Committee, the parent or teacher should be directed to the campus administrator. The ARD Committee does not have the authority to evaluate the job performance of an individual teacher/staff member. Only the campus administrator has that authority.

If a parent requests an ARD Committee meeting, the staff member to whom the request is made may find it appropriate to inform parents of the functions of ARD committees and the circumstances or types of problems for which requesting an ARD committee meeting would be appropriate. If the parent requests a meeting the District must schedule an ARD Committee meeting or request mediation from the Texas Education Agency. There are provisions for declining to convene an excessive number of ARDs at a parent request (requests weekly ARDs, etc.). However, the campus will need to discuss declining a parent's request for an ARD with the

Director of Special Services in order to determine whether the special provisions apply.

Note: If a child has been removed from parental custody and is in foster care, a surrogate parent should be appointed for the child. The foster parent can be designated as the surrogate parent. If the foster parent has not received surrogate parent training from a Special Services department staff member, contact the Special Services office to arrange the training within 90 calendar days of designation as a surrogate parent.

ARD Committee meetings must be held for the following reasons:

Initial Placement:

An ARD Committee meeting must be held within 30 calendar days of the date of the Full Individual Initial Evaluation (there are special rules when the consent for evaluation was obtained late in the school year). The assessment staff member (LSSP, Diagnostician, SLP, VI, DHH) will prepare, schedule initial ARDs, and coordinate with the campuses to arrange the participation of the special education teacher, general education teacher, and administrator. The ARD Notice will be sent by the campus special education representative or campus designee.

Transfer Students (students who enroll the first day of a new school year or during the school year – Transfer Student-Agreement to be Implemented:

As soon as a parent contacts the campus and indicates that their child has an IEP:

- Ask them to provide the current IEP and evaluation.
- Within one school day the campus notifies the Special Education department, completes a Gray form and sends it along with any documentation the parent provided to the Special Education Department.
- The Special Education Department will request records through TREx.
- The campus and district Special Education team members will review the IEP and determine what services the child receives.
- The campus will schedule a temporary placement ARD within 10 school days.
- Within 30 school days a permanent placement ARD will be held to update goals and services as needed based on data collected.

New Students (not transfer students according to TEA):

For students who move to the district over the summer and are newly enrolled PRIOR to the first day of a new school year, an ARD Committee meeting must be held to put a new IEP in place prior to the first day of classes.

Annual Review ARD:

Each special education case manager is responsible for initiating an ARD meeting, for the purpose of developing, reviewing, and revising the IEP, for each student receiving special education services for whom he/she on their case load at least annually. The annual review ARD meeting must be held each year prior to the anniversary date. The Annual reviews should be scheduled at least two weeks prior to the Annual Review anniversary. The special education teacher or administrator will contact the SLP/Diagnostician/LSSP or other required members regarding available dates and then send the ARD notification.

Discipline:

If a student is removed from his/her special education placement for 10 or more **cumulative** school days, this is a change of placement. A Manifestation Determination ARD must be held. A Functional Behavioral Assessment (FBA) may be developed with a Behavior Intervention Plan (BIP). In the event that the behavior is determined to be a manifestation of the disability, the FBA/BIP must be developed.

Adding/Removing a Related Service:

An ARD committee meeting must be held to add or delete a related service from a student's schedule. An evaluation (could be informal/review of existing education data) must be completed.

Schedule Change that Results in a Change of Placement:

An ARD Committee meeting must be held to change a student receiving special education services special education time if that schedule change results in a change of placement.

Graduation ARDs:

There may be times when it is appropriate to schedule a graduation ARD Committee meeting prior to the annual review date. The parent/student may request the meeting so that the graduation supplement and Summary of Performance are available when the student is preparing college and/or technical school applications.

ARD Committee meetings may also be held for the following reasons, although an IEP Amendment could be held in lieu of a meeting if all parties are in agreement:

Attendance:

If a student receiving special education services is not in compliance with attendance policies, the campus compulsory attendance procedures should be followed, including court action as provided by law. An ARD Committee meeting may be scheduled if absences are interfering with the student's ability to obtain educational benefit from the educational program determined by

the ARD Committee. The ARD Committee cannot excuse absences, but rather discuss the possibility of additional services that could result in improved attendance.

Accommodations/Modifications Changes:

An ARD may be scheduled to approve any additions or deletions of accommodations/modifications/supports but this may be completed as an ARD Amendment. The classroom teacher, special education teacher, related service provider, or parent may request an Amendment or an ARD meeting to change accommodations/modifications.

ARD Meetings to Address Failing Grades:

Special education teachers and case managers should monitor their student's academic performance in all subject areas. When a student receiving special education services has earned a failing grade on their report card, steps should be taken to address the failure. The steps might range from parent and teacher telephone collaboration to scheduling an ARD Committee meeting to add services and/or accommodations. All efforts to address the failure should be documented.

ARD Committee Attendance

IDEA 2004 specifies the required members of the IEP Team. In Texas, there are additional requirements, and this team is referred to as the Admissions, Review and Dismissal (ARD) Committee. The ARD Committee means a group of individuals composed of:

- The parents of the child with a disability;
- Not less than one regular education teacher of such a child (if the child is or may be participating in the regular education environment);
- Not less than one special education teacher, or where appropriate, not less than one special education provider of such child who, as a member of the ARD Committee, to the extent appropriate, participates in the development, review and revision of the IEP, including the determination of appropriate positive behavioral interventions and supports and other strategies for the child, and supplementary aids and services, program modifications and supports for school personnel;
- A representative of the local agency (Administrator):
    - who is qualified to provide, or supervise the provision of, specially designed instruction to meet the unique needs of children with disabilities;
    - who is knowledgeable about the general education curriculum; and
    - who is knowledgeable about the availability of resources of the local education agency;
    - An individual who can interpret the instructional implications of evaluation results who may be one of the other members (this may be the special education teacher if the evaluation has already been accepted as part of the student's IEP);

- Other individuals who have knowledge or special expertise regarding the child, at the discretion of the parent or the agency;
    - related services personnel as appropriate;
    - in the case of a child who has previously served under Early Childhood Intervention (ECI), the ECI service coordinator or other representatives of the ECI system to assist with the smooth transition of services; and
    - the school nurse for students with an Individual Health plan.

- The student with a disability, whenever appropriate and when the purpose of the meeting will be the consideration of transition services;
- For a child who is Deaf or Hard of Hearing (D/HH) including deaf-blindness, a teacher who is certified in the education of children with D/HH (will be case manager if D/HH only);
- For a child with a Visual Impairment (VI) including deaf-blindness, a teacher who is certified in the education of children with visual impairments (will be case manager if VI only);
- For a child with limited English proficiency (LEP), a member of the language proficiency assessment committee (LPAC) when determining participation in Statewide Assessments, LEP exit criteria, and LEP reclassification, to address the child's language needs; and
- When considering initial or continued placement of a student in career and technology education (CTE), a representative from CTE, preferably the teacher.

ARD members serving in dual roles.

Very few dual roles are allowable.

- Assessment staff may serve as, general education teacher, special education teacher or LEA representative.

- The LPAC representative can serve as the general education or special education teacher and the

- Dyslexia specialist can serve as the general education or special education teacher.

If an ARD Committee member is serving in a dual capacity, that person should sign the ARD document in both places if they have the appropriate certifications.

An ARD Committee member is not required to attend (in whole or in part) if:

- The parent and the district agree:
- The member's attendance is not necessary; and

- The member's area of curriculum or related services is not being modified or discussed in the meeting; and
- The parent's agreement is in writing.

An ARD Committee member is excused from attending (in whole or in part) if:

- The parent and the local education agency consent to the excusal;
- The parent's consent is in writing; and
- The member submits in writing to the parent and the ARD Committee input into the development of the IEP prior to the meeting.

Note: Complete and include with the ARD paperwork the document in Frontline titled "ARD Member Not Required to Attend ARD Meeting" to the ARD document if the ARD Committee member is not required to attend, or excused from the ARD Meeting.

ARD Committee: General Considerations

Setting the stage: It is often helpful to establish ground rules or norms for the ARD Committee before convening the meeting. Ground rules can be posted on a chart as a reminder to the participants. Sample ground rules might read like the following:

- Turn cell phones to silent
- Remain in the meeting for the duration
- Be respectful of other participants
- Be prepared to support your comments with data and examples
- Speak in easily understood terms and avoid jargon
- Stay on topic; stick to the agenda
- Allow all participants to speak without being interrupted

Digital recording: District personnel should always digitally record an ARD Committee meeting if a parent is recording the meeting. The district does not provide recording services for parents. The district records only when the parent records. If a parent is recording a meeting let the committee know that you will be recording so the district has their own copy.

- The ARD designee will open the Quiktime player app on their computer, right click and select new audio recording. Then click on the red dot. When the ARD is done click on the red dot again to stop recording, at the top of the computer screen it should read QuickTime Player, click on "file" and then "save." Use this naming convention, last name underscore first initial type of meeting underscore, month and year ex: Smith_J_ARD_Jan 2026. Let the Special Education office know and they will send you a link to a folder to upload the recording.

Parent concerns: Someone on the ARD Committee should respond to any concerns brought to the committee. Parent concerns should always be addressed, and often the administrator is the best person to address parent concerns. In some cases, a parent will bring up the same concern at every ARD meeting. Even if the concern has been previously addressed it is important to again state the district's response to the parent concern. No matter how many times the concern

is voiced, the district's response should be stated and documented in the deliberations and prior written notice, every time.

Personnel issues: ARD Committees determine eligibility and programming for student receiving special education services. The ARD Committee does not make personnel decisions. The ARD Committee document should not specify a particular person as an implementer of the IEP. The position of the implementer should be reported, not the individual.

If a parent claims that the program determined by the ARD Committee is not being implemented correctly, that is a personnel issue that is not within the jurisdiction of the ARD Committee. In such cases the administrator at the ARD meeting should inform the parent that ARD Committees have no authority over personnel issues and direct the parent to schedule a conference with the administrator.

If an administrator has found that an IEP has not been properly implemented, the administrator should schedule an ARD Committee meeting to consider possible compensatory services.

Curriculum issues: Teachers make instructional decisions concerning which tools or materials are appropriate for their student receiving special education services. The ARD Committee document should not state a specific curriculum or specific materials to be used for instruction. The program or materials used on one campus may not be available or appropriate on the campus the student will attend the next year.

Site selection: ARD Committees do not determine the site of the provision of services. School districts can have cluster sites for some specialized services. If a parent wants services provided at a specific location the Administrator should advise the parent that the ARD Committee has no jurisdiction over site selection. The parent can then be advised about the process to request a specific location for services.

Below is a bulleted summary of items that are NOT ARD Committee decisions:

- Personnel (teacher, counselor, school psychologist, diagnostician, SLP, etc.)
- Specific named curriculum
- Specific device (tablet, not iPad or Samsung, etc.)
- Bullying investigation and findings unless it results in supplementary aides or services that must be provided to ensure student safety and therefore documented in the IEP.
- Location (which campus) of specific programs
- Electives
- Bus Routes
- College Board/SAT/PSAT/ACT Accommodations
- Accommodations for colleges/universities/trade schools/technical colleges
- Addition of a class or setting (adding another grade level inclusion class, adding another modified section)

- Staffing concerns related to administrative needs rather than what the student requires; If the development of the IEP would require additional staffing or a change to current campus assignments, this is not an ARD Committee decision or discussion.
- Decisions about student discipline, such as suspension or expulsion, are not handled by the ARD committee. These decisions are usually made by the school administration in accordance with school policies.

Admissions, Review, and Dismissal (ARD) Committee Meetings:

LSSP, Diagnostician, ARD Facilitator and/or Speech Pathologist Responsibilities

ARD Preparation

Prior to the ARD meeting the Case Manager should:

- Prepare all ARDs in the Frontline/eSped system in advance of the actual meeting.
- Print a signature page for the ARD in advance of an actual in-person meeting. You will then be prepared for any failure of technology.
- When a Case Manager is not prepared for an ARD meeting this may result in cancelling, halting, or rescheduling the ARD. It is the expectation that Case Managers come to the meeting with all relevant information.

ARD Procedures

When the ARD Committee convenes:

- Complete the documentation reflecting the decisions made by the ARD Committee.
- Provide the parent with a copy of the Procedural Safeguards at each annual ARD.
- Provide the ARD Committee with accurate information about the STAAR test and help the committee make appropriate decisions (when applicable).
- Plan needed evaluations (re-evaluations, additional evaluations) and/or conduct REEDs if evaluation is not needed.
  - REED may be planned and completed, if appropriate, prior to dismissal from special education (unless a formal evaluation is deemed to be required).
  - For a student whose eligibility terminates due to graduation with a regular diploma or due to exceeding age eligibility, re-evaluation is not necessary. However, all student receiving special education services graduating from high school shall be provided with a Summary of Performance.
- Archive and provide a copy of the ARD document to the parent/guardian/adult student immediately following the ARD. However, this is not always feasible. If the committee is not able to provide a copy of the ARD document on the day of the meeting, mail the document within two business days.

ARD Supplements/Additional Forms

Ensure that the following supplements/forms are completed, when indicated:

- Deaf or Hard of Hearing (D/HH) and/or Visual Impairment (VI) supplement
  - The DHH and/or VI supplements must be completed for each annual ARD for a child with a visual impairment or an auditory impairment.
  - The teacher of students who are Deaf or Hard of Hearing (D/HH representative) must be present at all ARDs of students with that eligibility.
  - The teacher of students with Visual Impairments (VI) must be present for all ARDs of students with that eligibility.
- Autism supplement for each annual ARD for all students coded (AU/PDD)

  NOTE: The autism supplement is lengthy and detailed. Special education teachers may be asked to provide information to the ARD Committee about the topics on the autism supplement.
- Individual Health Plan (IHP) for each student with identified health needs that affect the student's daily functioning and ability to access their educational program.
- Out of district placement supplement
  - If a student is placed out of district, an on-site observation is required, prior to the placement.
  - All out of district placements require approval from the Special Education Director prior to ARD action.
- Transition considerations before the student's 14th birthday.
    - Most of the information on transition should be gathered by the folder teacher prior to the annual ARD meeting.
    - Make an effort to involve students in the transition discussions at ARD meetings.
  - A Prior Written Notice (PWN) should be completed during each ARD meeting:
    - Document what was offered
    - What was not offered
    - Or what was denied and why
    - A student does not meet special education eligibility, and/or
    - A parent makes a request, the ARD Committee considers the request and determines that the request should not be granted, and the parent disagrees with the decision of the ARD Committee.

    NOTE: The Notice of Refusal/Decision (PWN): The Director of Special Education should be notified immediately after the ARD if the parent made a request that was denied.

  - Transportation: Each time the ARD Committee determines that special transportation is a necessary related service, a copy of the transportation form should be completed and sent to the transportation department within one working day initially. At the end of each school year, submit updated Transportation Forms to the Transportation Department to set up schedules for the upcoming year.

- Behavior Improvement Plan (BIP): When a student's BIP should be implemented while the student is using district transportation, a copy of the BIP should be sent to the transportation department within one working day and must be provided to campus administration by the 2nd business day.

Additional Considerations for High School Students

Transfer of Rights, if appropriate:

Not later than one year before the 18th birthday of a child with a disability, the local education agency (LEA) at which the child is enrolled must advise the student and the student's parent that parental rights will transfer to the student at age 18 unless the student's parent has been granted guardianship under the Texas Estates Code. Additionally, the IEP team must ensure that the child's individualized education program (IEP) includes a statement that the LEA provided the written notice regarding the transfer of rights of the child and information and resources regarding guardianship, alternatives to guardianship including a supported decision-making agreement, and other supports and services that may enable the adult student to live independently, and transfer rights upon the student's 18th birthday. Utilize the Notice of Transfer of Rights Model Form.

Transition – prior to reaching age 14 the student's IEP must include:

- Appropriate measurable goals for after high school that are based on age appropriate transition assessments for training, education, employment, and where appropriate, independent living skills, and
- The transition services (including courses of study) needed to help the student achieve the goals.

By the end of their freshman year, a personal graduation plan must be reviewed in ARD and included in the IEP documentation. This document should clearly outline the Courses of Study proposed/planned for the four years of high school.

Graduation:

- All decisions about graduation for students with disabilities should be made by the ARD Committee, not the Individual Graduation Committee (IGC).
- Graduation type, including foundations, pursuant to IEP, endorsement or distinguished achievement should be documented.
- The graduation supplement, including the Summary of Performance should be completed.
- The graduation type should be summarized in the prior written notice.

Note: Student receiving special education services who have attended high school for four years may participate in graduation ceremonies. §TEC 28.025(d) statute specifies that a school district shall issue a "certificate of attendance" to a student who receives special

education services and has completed four years of high school but will continue enrollment to complete their IEP. Students receiving a certificate of attendance may participate in only one graduation ceremony and may receive a diploma upon meeting the requirements specified in 19 TAC §89.1070.

Graduation - Foundations Plan with Endorsement

What is an endorsement?

An endorsement signifies college readiness. Students wishing to meet minimum admissions requirements to enter directly into an accredited Tier 1 or 2 four year university in Texas would require an endorsement.

To earn an endorsement:

- A student must earn at least 26 credits to earn an endorsement.
- A school district may define advanced courses and determine a coherent sequence of courses for an endorsement area, provided that prerequisites in Chapters 110-117, 127, and 130 of this title are followed.
- To earn an endorsement a student must demonstrate proficiency in the following.

(1) The curriculum requirements for the Foundation High School Program as defined by §74.12 of this title (relating to Foundation High School Program).

(2) A fourth credit in mathematics that may be selected from one full credit or a combination of two half credits from two different courses, subject to prerequisite requirements, from the following courses:

(A) Algebra II;

(B) Precalculus;

(C) Advanced Quantitative Reasoning;

(D) Independent Study in Mathematics;

(E) Discrete Mathematics for Problem Solving;

(F) Algebraic Reasoning;

(G) Statistics;

(H) a comparable Advanced Placement (AP) mathematics course that does not count toward another credit required for graduation;

(I) AP Computer Science A;

(J) International Baccalaureate (IB) Computer Science Higher Level;

(K) Engineering Mathematics;

(L) Statistics and Business Decision Making;

(M) Mathematics for Medical Professionals;

(N) Discrete Mathematics for Computer Science;

(O) pursuant to the Texas Education Code (TEC), §28.025(b-5), after the successful completion of Algebra II, a mathematics course endorsed by an institution of higher education as a course for which the institution would award course credit or as a prerequisite for a course for which the institution would award course credit. The Texas Education Agency (TEA) shall maintain a current list of courses offered under this subparagraph; and

19 TAC §89.1070(c)

(c) A student receiving special education services may earn an endorsement under §74.13 of this title (relating to Endorsements) if the student:

(1) satisfactorily completes the requirements for graduation under the Foundation High School Program specified in §74.12 of this title as well as the additional credit requirements in mathematics, science, and elective courses as specified in §74.13(e) of this title with or without modified curriculum;

(2) satisfactorily completes the courses required for the endorsement under §74.13(f) of this title without any modified curriculum or with modification of the curriculum, provided that the curriculum, as modified, is sufficiently rigorous as determined by the student's ARD committee; and

(3) performs satisfactorily as established in the TEC, Chapter 39, on the required end-of-course assessment instruments unless the student's ARD committee determines that satisfactory performance is not necessary.

Other Requirements of an Endorsement:

1. Completed the Foundation High School Program, with or without modifications to required curriculum.
2. Completed the additional credit requirements in math, science and elective courses required for the endorsement, with or without modifications.
3. Completed the four endorsement-specific courses, with or without modifications to the curriculum.
4. If any curriculum was modified, the student’s admission, review, and dismissal committee (ARDC) has determined that the curriculum, as modified, is sufficiently rigorous.
5. Passed required EOCs or the student’s ARDC has determined that the student is not

required to achieve satisfactory performance on an end-of-course assessment instrument to earn an endorsement.

ARD Committee Considerations of Demonstration of Sufficient Rigor

State and federal regulations allow the ARD committee to develop and implement a student's individualized IEP, including modifying content. If a student requires a modification of content/curriculum that significantly impacts the methodology, breadth of instruction delivered, and/or criteria for demonstration of mastery, these specially designed/modified course or courses may be appropriately ambitious and comprehensive for the student's unique circumstances but insufficiently rigorous for the purposes of conferring an endorsement.

If a student has required modified curriculum, one or more of the following would provide the ARD committee with demonstrations of rigor:

- 3 of 5 passed for the EOC/STAAR (does not include STAAR ALT)
- Evidence of successful completion for non-modified courses in consecutive years in 11th/12th grade or by senior year in the areas of modified content
- TSI college ready in reading, writing, math per modified courses currently enrolled
- College readiness scores obtained on the SAT/ACT
- MAP Results (College Readiness Projections)
- ASVAB T-Score of 50 or above (minimum score for enlistment in a military branch is 40)
- ACC TSI prepared course completed/passed
- Passed College Algebra or English (dual enrollment, etc.)

Admission, Review, and Dismissal (ARD) Committee Meeting Agenda

1. Introductions
2. Confirmation that all required members are present
3. Purpose of the ARD
4. Eligibility
5. Assessment (review/request)
6. Parent concerns
7. Develop/Present proposed IEP goals and objectives. Does the ARD committee believe that the goals are appropriately ambitious?
8. Accommodations and/or Modifications; personal care service, if appropriate
9. Schedule of Services (current year/next year)
10. District Testing
11. State of Texas Assessment of Academic Readiness (STAAR) testing, accelerated instruction (AI) or intensive plan of instruction (IPI) when indicated (SB 4545)
12. Consideration of Extended School Year (ESY)
13. Supplements if appropriate (i.e., autism, behavior improvement plan (BIP), personal care plan, individual health plan, etc.)
14. Special Transportation, if indicated
15. Least Restrictive Environment (LRE)/Harmful Effects

16. Assurances/Confidentiality Statement
17. Review deliberations (upon request)
18. Signature Page
19. Obtain any consent(s) needed

Least Restrictive Environment and the Continuum of Services

IDEA requires that a student with a disability be educated in the least restrictive environment (LRE). This means that the student must be educated with children who do not have disabilities to the maximum extent appropriate. Removal of a student from the regular educational environment may only occur if the nature or severity of his or her disability is such that education in regular classes with the use of supplementary aids and services cannot be achieved satisfactorily.

Supplementary aids and services means aids, services, and other supports that are provided in regular education classes, other education-related settings, and in extracurricular and nonacademic setting, to enable students with disabilities to be educated with students without disabilities to the extent appropriate. A core part of the special education process involves determining the appropriate educational placement for implementing the specialized instruction that the ARD Committee has determined is necessary.

Placement refers to the points along the continuum of placement options (i.e., regular classes, special classes, special schools, homebound instruction, instruction in hospitals and institutions) available for a student with a disability. Placement does not refer to the specific physical location or site where the services will be delivered. The ARD Committee determines the educational placement based on the child's IEP.

Uvalde CISD provides the full continuum of services available for students with disabilities:

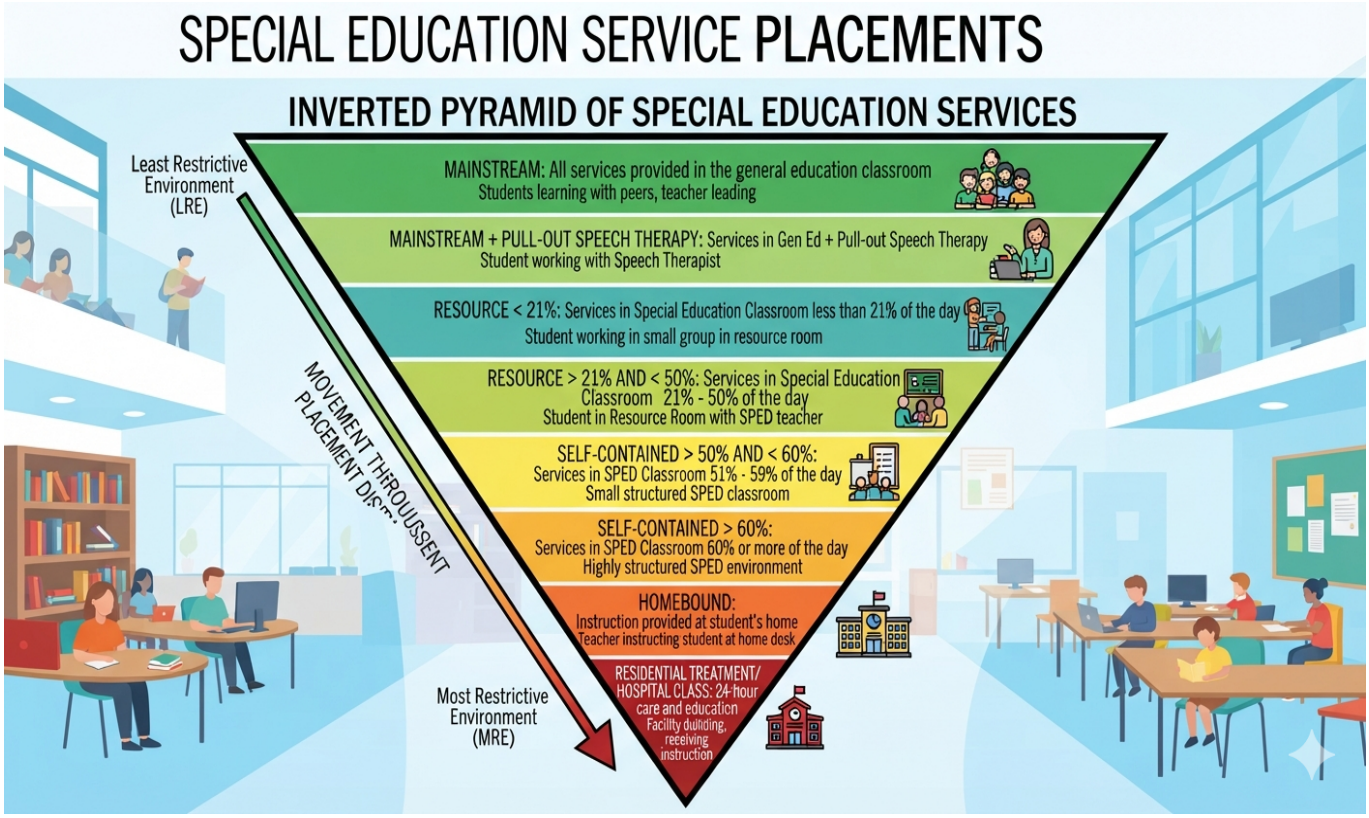
- Mainstream
- Inclusion Support
- Co-Teach classrooms
- Speech therapy, VI services, D/HH Services
- Resource room or services
- Full-time Early Childhood special education setting
- Self-Contained for Behavior Support
- 18+ Program
- Vocational class/program
- Off home campus
- Homebound
- Hospital class
- Nonpublic day school (must be approved by the Texas Education Agency)

- Residential care and treatment facility
- State supported living center

The Texas Education Agency's Student Accounting Handbook lists and describes all the available instructional arrangements/settings. While UCISD does not have to have all placements available at all times, the placements are be available when an ARD Committee determines it is appropriate to the individual needs of the student.

When considering placement, the ARD Committee considers the regular classroom in the school the student would attend if not disabled as the first placement option. If a student with a disability can be educated satisfactorily with appropriate aids and supports in the regular classroom in the school the student would attend if not disabled, that placement is the LRE placement for that student. However, if the ARD Committee determines that a student cannot be educated satisfactorily in that environment, even with the provision of appropriate aids and supports, more restrictive settings can be considered.

Placement discussions should move from the top of the inverted pyramid to the bottom.



Referral

Each campus reviews the instructional program, interventions, and progress of struggling

students. Following careful review, the committee may determine that a referral to special education for a Full and Individual Initial Evaluation (FIIE) is appropriate. Students referred to special education should be suspected of having a disability and should demonstrate a need for special education services.

Parents may also refer a child for a special education evaluation. If a parent requests a special education evaluation in writing, the request should be conveyed to the Special Education office immediately. The district has 15 school days to either offer the parent/guardian the opportunity to sign consent or provide the parent a notice of decision not to evaluate the student.
** The Notice of Decision not to evaluate is completed by Evaluation staff only.

Evaluation
The special education teacher's first awareness of a new referral may be at the time an assessment staff member informs the special education teacher that a child may qualify for special education services, and an ARD meeting is being scheduled.

The special education teacher, speech pathologist, and/or related service provider should have electronic access to the FIIE by midnight on the due date of the evaluation. The Present Levels of Academic Achievement and Functional Performance (PLAAFP) in eSped should be completed for each area of significant deficit, along with the goals, and possibly objectives prior to the ARD Committee meeting. A draft copy should be sent to the parent at least 3-5 days before the ARD meeting and brought to the meeting for the committee's review.

IEP Development (Special Education Case Manager Responsibilities)

Complete the following steps to develop an IEP:

(Note: All IEPs should include assessment data.)

1. Determine the student's Present Levels of Academic Achievement and Functional Performance (PLAAFP) using data from various sources. These may include the FIIE (if less than one year old), general education teacher reports, state and local assessment data, reports provided by the parent, etc. The PLAAFP will be the starting point from which progress will be measured.
2. Complete the Present Levels of Academic Achievement and Functional Performance (PLAAFP) in eSped.
3. Select/write IEP goals and objectives based on the information documented on the PLAAFP form.

The special education case manager will bring the draft of the PLAAFPs and goals and to the ARD meeting.

Send a copy of draft PLAAFPs and goals to the parent 3-5 days prior to the

ARD Committee Meeting

After all testing is complete and the evaluation and IEP are drafted for initials provision of services, an ARD Committee meeting will be held. The special education case manager or his/her campus designee is responsible for coordinating with the assessment staff and the

special education office for scheduling the meeting. Notification of the meeting must be sent to the parent and all appropriate school personnel must be notified so they can plan to attend the meeting.

At the ARD meeting, the responsibilities of the special education teacher include:

- Status of the previous goals (mastered, discontinued, etc.);
- Being prepared to report on Present Levels of Academic Achievement and Functional Performance (PLAAFP);
- Presenting status reports, including information from general education teachers;
- Reviewing Accommodations/Modifications that have been entered;
- Reviewing previous STAAR results;
- Being prepared to discuss STAAR testing recommendations and accommodations that have been entered prior to the ARD;
- Reviewing the Accelerated Instruction (AI) plan or the Intensive Program of Instruction (IPI) (if applicable);
- Reviewing drafts of IEP goals and objectives; and

Special Education Teacher Preparation for ARD Meetings

In order for ARD meetings to be completed within a reasonable time span, it is essential that the necessary pre-planning and preparation be accomplished. Use the ARD Checklist on pages following as a guide when preparing for ARD Committee meetings.

The primary purpose of the annual ARD Committee meeting is to review current progress and to plan for the coming IEP year.

- Complete the PLAAFPs in eSped and follow the procedures for opening and developing a draft IEP. Send draft IEP goals and objectives to the parent at least three school days prior to the scheduled ARD meeting. Be prepared to discuss the student's PLAAFP as a basis for the IEP.

- Be realistic as to what can be accomplished in a year. Students in classrooms using an alternative or modified curriculum should have at least two objectives for each goal. Usually no more than five objectives per goal are appropriate. Be discriminating in choosing the appropriate objectives. Students in an inclusion setting may need only a goal or two. Students who will be receiving specialized instruction in the special education setting will need objectives for each goal.

- For all students, it is the responsibility of the special education case manager to gather input from the general education teacher(s) to present to the ARD Committee meeting. Case managers should request information about the student's progress, the effectiveness of the accommodations that have been in place and

recommendations for the upcoming IEP year at least four weeks in advance of the ARD Committee meeting to allow for time to draft or update the ARD paperwork.

- If the student has not met passing standards or the STAAR (or other tests for K-2), come to the ARD with a copy of the Accelerated Instruction (AI) or Intensive Program of Instruction (IPI) that can be discussed/documented as an ARD Committee. Be prepared to address the frequency duration, and location of AI/IPI services.

- Invite the Speech Therapy or Related Service provider to the meeting.

- If this is a review ARD, review the previous year's IEP, reporting progress and the dates skills were mastered. The IEP should be updated prior to the meeting. Gather information from all teachers. Additionally utilize progress reports and data in Branching Minds.

- Have the student's schedule, grades, and transcript (if applicable). If the counselor is attending the ARD Committee meeting, he/she will be able to provide the transcript. When the ARD Committee is planning for the next school year, be prepared with appropriate schedule options, prerequisites, and any other information that is necessary to plan an appropriate schedule.

- Advise regular teachers (who will be attending the ARD) what information they should bring to the ARD:
  - Information from report cards, grade books, etc.
  - Documentation of the effectiveness of past strategies/accommodations
  - Work samples
  - Specific concerns

- If you have not heard from the parent(s), follow up the ARD notification with a note or phone call to establish whether or not the parent(s) will attend, or if the ARD can be held without their attendance. If the parent(s) is unable to attend, ask him/her if there are any concerns he/she would like brought before the Committee. Document this phone call and bring the information to the ARD. Document all contact with parents in Frontline/eSped notices screen titled "Invitation to ARD Meeting – 3."

ARD Meeting Checklist

Schedule the ARD

Follow campus procedures regarding who will schedule ARD meetings and send notices.

Prep for Annual ARD

Case Manager:

Open a "Draft" document in eSped.

- Collect teacher/staff input (General Ed – classroom teacher, dyslexia, ESL, etc.)

Complete the following ARD Documents as applicable in the "Draft" file in eSped:

- PLAAFP: Describe student strengths and weaknesses in each area of the PLAAFP.
- Write goals and objectives to reflect weaknesses in PLAAFP (eSped: ARD Forms: Measurable Annual Goals).
- Complete accommodations using the "Accommodations List" screen (both daily and STAAR) screens in eSped. Note: ** STAAR accommodations should also be listed in classroom accommodations.
- STAAR/district assessment decisions: Come to the ARD prepared with recommendations and supporting documentation for testing and necessary accommodations and have these proposals entered into the STAAR section.
- AI/IPI – Come to ARD prepared with an AI/IPI plan that can be attached to the ARD document. Be prepared to discuss the frequency, location, and duration of AI/IPI service.
- Complete STAAR ALT Supplement in eSped, if applicable.
- Complete the Personal Care Services Supplement in Frontline/eSped, if applicable.
- Complete/Update the BIP, if applicable.
- Having nursing staff complete Individualized Health Plan (for students who receive nursing services), if applicable, and invite the school nurse if needed.
- Conduct transition assessment or Structured Transition Interview with student/parents, complete transition screens and write post-secondary goals or students at annual ARD before they turn 14.
- Complete any Child Outcome Summary Forms, if applicable (this applies to students ages 3-5 not in kinder).
- Complete Special Education Contingency Plan screen and prepare HB 4545 information as appropriate.

Send draft IEP home to parents: (*Should be sent at least 5 school days prior to date of ARD)*

- Draft copy of proposed goals/objectives
- Attach a cover letter to the IEP Goals/Objectives, providing parents with your conference period and contact information. Let them know that they can contact you if they have any questions.

At ARD:

Case Manager:

- Give parent copy of Final IEP Progress Report from eSped (dated the same as the start date of the new goals)
- Review PLAAFPs
- Review IEP Progress and New Proposed Goals and Objectives
- Present Draft IEP Goals and Objectives

- Discuss recommendations for accommodations (including consideration of Assistive Technology)
- Discuss recommendations for STAAR and AI/IPI plans

After ARD:

- Within 2 business days after the ARD, the LSSP/Diag/SLP/ARD Facilitator will notify Bebe Patino that the ARD is completed and archived.
- Case Manager will upload the testing accommodations, IEP/BIP goals and accommodations and STAAR accommodations into Branching Minds
- The case manager will then email the teachers to log in to Branching Minds to review the updated paperwork, print the accommodations tracker form (aka Accommodations Data Collection Forms).
- If the student has a BIP, include campus administrators and transportation on the email.
- Within 2 days the case manager will check in Branching Minds to make sure all teachers have reviewed the bundle.

Prep for Revision ARD

Case Manager:

- Revisions to the current IEP will be made within the "Active" file in eSped.
- Revisions will depend on the purpose of the Revision ARD. If you are adding new goals and discontinuing others, do not delete the previous goals. Rather, on the Progress Report, indicate that the goal has been "Discontinued."
- If the ARD Facilitator/LSSP/Diag/SLP is not in attendance at the ARD meeting, send the completed documentation on the Revision ARD form, signature page, and signed notice (if applicable) within one day so they can complete the paperwork in a timely manner.

Send draft IEP home to parents (if new goals are being proposed):

(Must be sent at least 3-5 school days prior to date of ARD)

- Draft copy of proposed goals/objectives (ARD Forms: eSped Full ARD B: Goals and Objectives)
- Attach a cover letter to the IEP Goals/Objectives, providing parents with your conference period and contact information. Let them know that they can contact you if they have any questions.

Prep for Initial ARD

Case Manager:

Collect teacher/staff input:

- FIE – Read and review FIE to develop PLAAFPs and Recommendations; teacher information will be included in the FIE. Continue to collaborate with the teacher for further recommendations when building the IEP.
- General Education – classroom teacher, dyslexia, ESL, etc.
- Special Education – Speech, OT, PT, VI, AT, O&M, D/HH.

The Case Manager or administrator is responsible for calling a staffing, as needed, with the other service providers.

Complete the following required ARD Documents in the "Draft" file in eSped:

- PLAAFP: Describe student strengths and weaknesses in each area of the PLAAFP.
- Write goals and objectives to reflect weaknesses in PLAAFP (eSped: ARD Forms; Measurable Annual Goals).
- Complete accommodation on the "Accommodations List" screen (both daily and STAAR) screens in eSped *before the ARD.* Note: STAAR accommodations should be listed in classroom accommodations.
- STAAR/district assessment decisions – Come to the ARD prepared with recommendations and supporting documentation for testing and necessary accommodations.
- AI/IPI- Come to the ARD prepared with an AI/IPI plan that can be attached to the ARD document. Be prepared to discuss the frequency, location, and duration of AI/IPI service.
- Complete the BIP, if applicable.
- Complete any other supplemental forms; i.e., personal care, health plan, etc.

Inform administration of recommendations for schedule of services, goals, and objectives. (Must be sent at least 5 school days prior to the date of the ARD.)

IEP Start Dates (initial provision of services only)

To allow time for information distribution following initial ARDs, IEP goals will take effect 5 school days after the meeting date. (which is actually the 6th school day after the ARD is held). The end date will continue to be the same; one school day before the current annual ARD meeting date of the following year. For example, if the current annual ARD date is 9/6/26, the start date for the goals will be 9/14/26, and the end date will be 9/5/27.

There will be situations when the 5 day waiver may be asked of parents. However, the parent/ guardian/adult student cannot require that we waive the five school days and start new services earlier. The district can reserve the right in order to ensure that all implementers of the IEP have access to it.

State and/or District-Wide Assessment

The current Texas assessment program reflects the rigor of the Texas Essential Knowledge and Skills (TEKS) curriculum and also seeks to include as many students as possible in the State of Texas Assessments of Academic Readiness (STAAR). The STAAR includes 5 end-of-course (EOC) assessments for grades 9-12. All students have the right to be exposed to as much of the TEKS curriculum as possible so that they can reach their academic potential. For students receiving special education services, curriculum and testing decisions lie with the ARD Committee. The ARD Committee must weigh the benefits of rigorous and challenging expectations with the possibilities of success, given each student's individual strengths and needs.

Keeping high standards in mind, ARD Committees must choose the assessment that matches the educational needs of each individual student receiving special education services. ARD Committees should promote high expectations in determining the annual measurable goals documented in the student's IEP. It is important to emphasize that the instructional decisions made by the ARD Committee and documented in the IEP must always guide assessment decisions.

Each campus will be provided with information developed by the Texas Education Agency, providing guidance to ARD Committees, at the earliest possible date explaining to ARD Committees:

- How to make decisions about a student's placement in the Texas Assessment Program by using the TEKS curriculum as documented in the student's IEP, and

- How to determine which of the accommodations documented in the IEP are appropriate and allowable for the assessments.

ARD Committee members must have an understanding of the ARD Committee decision-making process**.**

Disciplinary Removals from the Special Education Program

In the case of a child whose behavior impedes his or her learning or that of others, the ARD Committee, in developing the child's IEP, shall consider strategies, including positive behavioral interventions and supports to address that behavior. If the ARD Committee determines that such services are needed, they must be added to the IEP, and they must be provided.

Use of restraint and time-out must be in accordance with the Texas Education Code 37.0021 and 19
T.A.C. 89.1053.

If the district initiates disciplinary procedures applicable to all students, the district shall ensure that the special education and disciplinary records of the student with a disability are transmitted for consideration by the person or persons making the final determination regarding disciplinary action.

When a principal or other appropriate administrator recommends disciplinary removal from the student's current IEP placement, a change of placement analysis should be conducted. To conduct a change of placement analysis:

- Count the days of disciplinary removal from the student's current educational placement.

- Portions of the school day that the child had been suspended are included in determining whether the child had been removed for more than 10 cumulative

school days or subjected to a change of placement.

- An in-school suspension would NOT be considered a part of the days of suspension as long as the child is afforded the opportunity to:
  - Appropriately progress in the general curriculum,
  - Continue to receive the services specified on his or her IEP,
  - **And** continue to participate with nondisabled students to the extent they would have in their current placement.
- Whether a bus suspension would count as a day of suspension would depend on whether the bus transportation is a part of the child's IEP.

- If the bus transportation is a part of the child's IEP (special transportation), a bus suspension would be treated as a suspension unless the district provides the bus service in some other way.

- If the bus transportation is not a part of the child's IEP, a bus suspension would not be a suspension.

Determine whether the disciplinary removal(s) constitute(s) a change of placement. A disciplinary change of placement occurs if:

- The removal is more than 10 consecutive days; or

- The student has been subjected to a series of removals that constitute a pattern –

  - Because the series of removals total more than 10 school days in a school year;

  - Because the student's behavior is substantially similar to the student's behavior in previous incidents that resulted in the series of removals; **and**

  - Because of such additional factors as the length of each removal, the total amount of time the child has been removed, and the proximity of the removals to one another.

- If the disciplinary removal(s) constitute(s) a change of placement, the district must:

  - Hold the disciplinary placement meeting and provide the parent with the Procedural Safeguards document on the date the decision is made to make a removal that constitutes a change of placement;

  - Schedule an ARD Committee meeting to conduct a Manifestation Determination within 10 school days of any decision to change the placement as well as provide

parent with an opportunity to provide consent for an FBA if there is not one already or if the current FBA does not address the behavior that resulted in the removal; and

- If the student has been removed from his/her placement for more than 10 days and the Manifestation Determination has not been conducted, return the student to the IEP placement ASAP.

If the disciplinary removal(s) constitute(s) a change of placement, the district must:

- When a disciplinary violation may result in a disciplinary change of placement to the DAEP for a student receiving Special Education support,
- the District will coordinate the Manifestation Determination Review (MDR) to occur on the same day immediately following the disciplinary hearing,
- To ensure meaningful parental participation, the District must provide Prior Written Notice and meeting invitations, explicitly informing the parent/guardian that the MDR will take place immediately after the hearing and identifying the required IEP team members in attendance.

While conducting back-to-back proceedings promotes timely resolution, team members must maintain a strict procedural boundary between the two meetings: the disciplinary hearing serves solely as a factual determination of the alleged conduct, whereas the subsequent MDR team must independently evaluate—based on comprehensive file reviews, teacher observations, and parental input—whether the conduct was caused by, or had a direct and substantial relationship to, the student's disability or a failure to implement the IEP.

If the disciplinary removals do not constitute a change of placement, conduct a short term removal analysis as follows:

If the short-term removal is for 10 cumulative school days or less:

- A school district need not provide services during periods of removal to a student with a disability who has been removed from his or her current placement for 10 school days or less in that school year, if services are not provided to a student without disabilities who has been similarly removed.

- In the case of a student whose behavior impedes his or her learning or that of others, convene an ARD Committee meeting, if appropriate, to consider strategies, including positive behavior interventions, strategies and supports to address the behavior.

Special Education assessment staff are available to provide consultation to district personnel for students receiving special education services concerning discipline/behavior issues.

Alternative Education Placement (AEP) and Expulsion Guidelines

AEP Placement

A student with a disability may not be placed in a District Alternative Educational Placement (DAEP) solely for educational purposes. The student must have engaged in misconduct warranting DAEP placement *and is entitled to all due process afforded to a student who does not have a disability accused of the same conduct.*

Placement exceeding 10 school days:

If a student with a disability is being considered for placement in a DAEP for longer than 10 school days, the following steps **must** be followed:

1. All procedural safeguards afforded a student without a disability must be followed.

2. The parent/adult student **must be provided the Notice of Procedural Safeguards** on the

   date the decision was made to make a removal that constitutes a change of placement.

3. An ARD Committee must consider all relevant evaluation and diagnostic information, relevant information supplied by the parent(s), observations of the student, and the student's IEP and placement.

4. The ARD Committee must complete a Manifestation Determination to determine whether or not DAEP placement is appropriate for this student and what services are needed to provide a FAPE (free appropriate public education).

   a. Was the conduct in question the **direct** result of the local educational agency's failure to implement the IEP? **(If yes, the student may not be placed in the DAEP.)**

   b. Was the conduct in question **caused by, or have a direct and substantial relationship** to the student's disability? **(If yes, the student may not be placed in the DAEP.)**

Removal for weapons or drug offenses:

School personnel may order a student with a disability to an appropriate DAEP for the same amount of time that a child without a disability would be subject to discipline, but for not more than 45 **school** days if:

1. The student carries or possesses a weapon to or at school, on school premises, or to or at a school function under the jurisdiction of a State or local education agency;

2. The student knowingly possesses or uses illegal drugs, or sells or solicits the sale of a controlled substance, while at school, on school premises, or at a school function under the jurisdiction of a State or local education agency; or

3. The student has inflicted serious bodily injury* upon another person while at school, on school premises, or at a school function under the jurisdiction of a State or local education agency. 20 U.S.C. 1415 (k)(l)(G).

***Serious bodily injury** is bodily injury which involves:

1. A substantial risk of death;

2. Extreme physical pain;

3. Protracted and obvious disfigurement; or

4. Protracted loss or impairment of the function of a bodily member, organ, or mental faculty. 20
U.S.C. 1415(k)(7)(D) and 18 U.S.C. 1365(h)(3).

Stay Put and Due Process

The parent of a child with a disability who disagrees with any decision regarding placement or the manifestation determination, may request a due process hearing. When a hearing is requested by the parent:

1. The student shall remain in the interim DAEP pending the decision of the hearing officer or until the expiration of the time period provided for, whichever occurs first, unless the parent and the local education agency agree otherwise, and

2. The state or local education agency shall arrange for an expedited hearing, which shall occur within 20 school days of the date of the hearing is requested and shall result in a determination within 10 school days after the hearing.

Expulsion of a Student with a Disability

Under IDEA, the student with a disability must be provided a free and appropriate public education regardless of placement. Expulsion is a change in placement with all services intact. **Contact the Director of Special Education immediately if a student is being considered for expulsion.**

IEP Amendments and Revisions ARDs

IEP Amendments

IEP Amendments are not ARD Committee meetings. IEP Amendments may be used for documenting small changes to the IEP such as adding an accommodation or changing transportation. This option allows us to make many changes without actually meeting as an ARD Committee. There are three conditions that must be met in order to amend an IEP:

1. **It must be allowable by law.** *Note: there are only three areas that cannot be done through the IEP Amendment process – eligibility determination, changes in placement, and manifestation determinations.*
2. **It must meet district policy.** *Note: this may include more areas that are "off-limits" than legally allowed.*
3. **The parent must agree with the "Amendment" process.** This should be documented in a parent communication log or with a copy of an email exchange in which the parent agrees.

The process includes the following steps for the special education case manager:

1. The Case Manager contacts the campus Administrator to discuss the proposed IEP changes. If they agree that the IEP Amendment is appropriate, proceed to step 2.
2. The Case Manager contacts the parent with the recommended "changes" or "amendments." Along with the change, describes the "amendment" process and documents the contact – either print the email or document the phone conversation. *Note: if the parent does not agree, or if they cannot be reached an ARD must be scheduled.*
3. After obtaining parent permission to proceed with the "amendment," email the Administrator and ARD Facilitator/LSSP/Diagnostician with the amendment to the IEP.
4. The amendment(s) will be completed by the Case Manager in eSped. Paperwork documenting the changes will be generated and will require two signatures: the Case Manager and campus administrator. The Case Manager will disseminate the document via Branching Minds.

Note: It is important to have clear documentation of the parent agreement to the process and the changes you recommend. Contact the Special Education office for additional questions about completing Amendments.

Revision ARDs

If the parent wants to meet, or if the student needs more or less time in special education, a Revision ARD will need to be held. A Revision ARD requires the full ARD Committee to meet. If a member is not needed or is unable to attend, use the "ARD Member Not Required to Attend ARD Meeting" form in eSped. For Revision ARDs, just like IEP Amendments, the ARD Facilitator will document the changes in eSped and distribute the document. LSSPs/Diagnosticians will not generally attend revision ARDs unless formal assessment is being addressed.

If you have any questions, please contact your campus ARD Facilitator or Administrator.

Prior Written Notice (PWN)

The PWN is one of the most important parts of the ARD document. It also the part of the document that is the easiest for a parent to understand. The ARD administrator will complete the PWN. To write a good PWN use people first language and document the proceedings in the following order:

Note that introductions were made and all required participants were in attendance (or reference excusal).

Example*: Introductions were made and all required participants were present.* **Note: When the number of ARD participants is large, it is helpful to ask each participant to sign in on a sheet of paper. This helps you know who is present, the role of the participant, and the correct spelling of their name.**

Always state the purpose of the meeting (annual review, schedule change, manifestation determination, etc.).

Example: The ARD Committee met for the purpose of annual review.

Address Eligibility.

Example: Johnny meets eligibility as a student with a learning disability in the areas of basic reading and reading comprehension.

Note any changes in eligibility (dropping or adding a disabling condition).

Example: An OHI eligibility form was received and reviewed. In addition to being a student with a Learning Disability, Johnny now meets the criteria as a student with an Other Health Impairment.

Note any evaluations that are requested.

Example: It was noted that Johnny has significant difficulty writing, and he has not made the expected progress on this writing goal. The ARD Committee agreed to request an Occupational Therapy Evaluation to further evaluate his fine motor/written language skills.

Document parent input, including their concerns. **Note:** Federal law requires that the "concerns of the parent for enhancing the education of their child" be considered in the development of the IEP."

Example: The parent expressed concerns about Johnny's reading. She noted that it is a struggle to get him to read anything at home. It was noted that the Committee will be considering Johnny's present reading levels and discussing reading goals. The special education teacher also offered to meet with Johnny's mother after the meeting to discuss strategies that the parent can use to encourage reading at home.

In addition to concerns, document parent statements concerning effective school practices.

Example: The parent reports that weekly spelling lists have helped Johnny's progress.

Note successes as well as struggles during a review of the Present Levels of Academic Achievement and Functional Performance (PLAAFP).

It is important to always include positive information about the student.

Example: The general education teacher reported that Johnny is interested in science and does particularly well when the class does hands-on experiments.

Note any problem areas and the committee's response (solutions) to the problems.

Example: The special education teacher reported that Johnny continues to struggle with reading and writing. She noted that he is making progress, but he has to put a lot of effort in reading and writing activities. At times he seems fatigued, so she used periodic "brain breaks" to help keep him alert and motivated.

Review grade reports (if applicable).

Example: Johnny is passing all his classes.

Document transition considerations (if applicable).

Example: Johnny's transition needs were discussed. He is interested in becoming a fireman.

Review goals, including skills mastered.

Example: The special education teacher noted progress and skills mastered from the previous IEP. She then reviewed her proposal for new goals for the coming year.

Review accommodations/modifications.

Example: The committee reviewed accommodations for Johnny. The general education teacher reported that Johnny has not needed extra time for completion of assignments, except for writing activities. The committee agreed to the accommodations recommended by the teachers.

Review the schedule of services.

Example: The schedule of services was reviewed. Johnny will continue to be in all regular classes, with 30 minutes of special education pull-out twice a week for special education reading instruction. He will have inclusion support for reading and writing activities for 30 minutes daily.

Review statewide testing decisions.

Example: Statewide testing was discussed. It was agreed that Johnny will take the online STAAR test with embedded accommodations.

Review the AI/IPI plan (if applicable).

Example: Johnny did not pass the STAAR reading test. The special education teacher presented the AI/IPI plan. In addition to his special education reading pull-out, Johnny will participate in small group reading instruction 3 days per week in the general education setting.

Review LRE, harmful effects, assurances, or any other ARD topics.

Example: Last year, Johnny did not like being pulled from his class for his special education intervention time, but this year he is always eager to go.

Indicate that the minutes of the meeting were read and approved **or** that the parent waived the reading of the minutes.

Example: The PWN was read and approved by the committee members. The meeting adjourned.

It is important to follow the ARD agenda. Often, parents will come to an ARD Committee meeting with an idea that they want to share. Those ideas can be shared early in the meeting when the committee is hearing the "parent's concerns for enhancing the education of the child." However, no decisions should be made at this point in the ARD Committee proceedings. All the ARD considerations should be reviewed before the schedule of services and placement decisions are made.

Sample scenario: It is not unusual for a parent to come to the meeting with an idea about placement. Maybe the parent wants the student in all regular classes. Or, maybe the parent wants the student to get OT services. In these cases, the committee should listen to the parent's ideas and then note that in the PWN and the committee will continue that discussion following a review of PLAAFPs, transition considerations, goals, accommodations/modifications, etc. When evaluating parent recommendations or requests the Prior Written Notice (PWN) or meeting documentation must explicitly state the district's decision and rationale:

- Approval: Document the specific agreed-upon services, frequency, duration, and implementation timeline.
- Refusal: State clearly that the district is declining the request and explain why.
- Supporting Data: Include concrete evidence to support any refusal—such as recent progress reports, classroom observation data, standardized evaluations, or work samples—demonstrating that the student is currently making adequate progress without the requested service.

Unanticipated ARD Happenings

When someone unexpected comes to an ARD Committee meeting:

- All ARD Committee participants invited by the district should have been included on the Notice of ARD Committee Meeting. If the district failed to invite a needed participant, another Notice of ARD should be generated, a copy given to the parent, and the parent should be asked to waive the 5-day notice requirement. If the parent chooses not to sign the waiver, the meeting should be rescheduled.
- If the parent brings someone to the ARD Committee meeting without having notified the campus ahead of time, the district representative should determine the relationship of this person to the student/family and document that relationship in the ARD deliberations (grandparent, friend, advocate, attorney, etc.).
    - If the parent is an advocate, ask who their employer is (company or organization) and document the information in the ARD deliberations. It will likely be appropriate to table this ARD if the person is acting as a **professional advocate**.
    - If the person is an **attorney or an advocate with a law firm**, ask the following question: Are you, or your firm, representing (student)? Document the answer in the ARD deliberations. Table the ARD and contact the Special Education office.

When discussions become heated or highly emotional, **take a break**, and resume the discussion after the participants have had some time to regroup.

- If an ARD Committee member uses language or tone that could be considered "bullying," the Administrator should stop the meeting and address the behavior with that individual. Bullying another ARD Committee member will not be tolerated.
- If district personnel make comments that appear incorrect or inappropriate, **take a break**, and talk to the individual privately before resuming the ARD proceedings.
- If you are uncertain about a legal requirement or procedure, **take a break**, and call the Special Education office for assistance.
- Sometimes parents, and occasionally school staff, will attempt to discuss personnel issues in ARD Committee meetings. This may take the form of requesting a particular teacher, discussing the job performance of a teacher, or stating a teacher is not following the IEP. **ARD Committees do not make personnel decisions.** All personnel issues should be directed to the campus administrator to be determined outside of the ARD Committee setting.

After the ARD

Following the completion of the ARD meeting there are several procedures that must be completed before the ARD process can be considered finished.

- Review the ARD document for accuracy. Be sure to make the draft **Active**
- Dyslexia codes need to be reviewed/updated regularly for students in special education with that additional disability/designation.
- Make arrangements for any additional evaluations requested.
- Make sure parents have received a copy of the ARD document. If the document was not given to the parent at the conclusion of the ARD Committee meeting the document should be provided no later than **two working days** after the meeting.
- "Dismissals, No-shows, DNQs, Parent or Adult Student Declined Services, Parent Revoked Consent, and Withdrawals" should be reported to the Special Education office as soon as the information is available. If a student withdraws to homeschool or private school, notify the Special Education so a letter offering FAPE can be sent.

Guidelines for Determining Paraprofessional Support

In some circumstances the ARD Committee may determine that a student with disabilities warrants the support of a one-on-one paraprofessional. These determinations should be carefully considered. Prior to making this recommendation to an ARD Committee, the special education teacher, the administrator, and any other knowledgeable persons should hold a staffing meeting to discuss options and alternative ways to support the student.

Although "extra support" may sound desirable on the surface, there can be numerous negative effects of having an adult attached to a student in a school setting, including:

- Separation from classmates – The student with a disability and an assigned paraprofessional are often seated in a place and manner that restricts interaction with

other students in the classroom.
- Unnecessary dependence – The student is hesitant to participate without the direction, prompting, or cueing of the paraprofessional.
- Insular relationships – The student and paraprofessional do almost everything together to the exclusion of other relationships. The result can be a decrease in the student's acquisition of social skills.
- Feelings of stigmatization – The student experiences embarrassment/discomfort from having the paraprofessional support because it causes the student to "stand out."
- Interference with teacher engagement – Teachers tend to be less involved with students when a paraprofessional is assigned because they feel that the student is already getting extra attention.
- Loss of personal control – The paraprofessional may do so much for the student that the student is unable to exercise the choices that are typical of most students.

When paraprofessional support for a student is being considered the recommendation should include specific information, such as:

- Is the classroom climate, arrangement, schedule, and behavior management effective? In some cases, the classroom teacher may need additional training or support, rather than an additional adult in the classroom.
- During which activities does the student need support? Toileting? Moving from one classroom to another? Initiating an assignment?
- Who can provide the needed support?
- When can the student be independent?
- What natural supports are available?
- How will the support be faded?
- When will extra support no longer be needed?
- What goal(s) would the paraprofessional be supporting? A goal for independent functioning should be considered.

If it is determined that paraprofessional support is needed the following should be considered:

- How much time, or at what times is the support needed?
- Can existing staff fill the need?
- What training does the paraprofessional need? Fading? Behavior management? Instructional strategies?
- What is the anticipated duration of the support?
- How often will the need for support be evaluated?

Given objective information, the ARD Committee can make a determination about the need for paraprofessional support. School personnel should acknowledge in the meeting that paraprofessional support is not a permanent solution, and that the goal of the paraprofessional support is to create successes that support the student with functioning independently.

Inclusion Classrooms

ALL students receiving special education services are first and foremost general education students. They should always be afforded access to any and all services, supports, activities, honors, and privileges that general education students enjoy. Most student receiving special education services spend the majority of their time in the general education classroom. The Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA) mandates that all student receiving special education services receive special education services in the least restrictive environment (LRE). This means that student receiving special education services should spend as much time as possible in settings with students who do not have disabilities.

Special education services are provided in several different models determined by the ARD Committee.

Inclusion support – Paraprofessional inclusion support offers push-in assistance to help students achieve their academic and behavioral IEP goals in the general education setting. Paraprofessionals facilitate student engagement, prompt replacement behaviors, and provide instructional scaffolding while actively promoting student autonomy.

Co-teach – Two certified professionals share the responsibility for lesson planning, delivery of instruction, and progress monitoring for all students in the classroom. Although the specialized instruction determined by the ARD Committee to the students with an IEP may be provided by the special education teacher, the general education teacher also supports the student receiving special education services.

Resource: A specialized instructional setting designed for students needing modified content and targeted academic intervention. Led by a Special Education teacher and supported by a paraprofessional, the resource room delivers small-group, skill-focused instruction in core subjects tailored to each student's unique learning needs and IEP accommodations.

Functional Life Skills: The Functional Life Skills classroom provides specialized, highly structured instruction designed to foster independence in students with significant cognitive or developmental needs. The program focuses on practical academics, daily living tasks, personal care, communication, social development, and pre-vocational training to help students successfully navigate school, home, and community settings.

CARE Unit: A specialized classroom setting focused on teaching self-regulation, social-emotional skills, and replacement behaviors while maintaining academic progress. Through individualized behavior intervention plans and trauma-informed support, the program prepares students for successful reintegration into less restrictive settings.

How many students with disabilities should be in the same general education setting?

The publication “Co-Teaching, A How-To Guide: Guidelines for Co-Teaching in Texas, A collaborative project of the TEA and the Statewide Progress in the General Curriculum Network” (revised January 2026) provides guidance. It states, “Co-teach classrooms should be the same

size as traditional classrooms with a comparable ratio of higher needs students." The document also notes that the number of students with special needs should be limited in co-teach classrooms, and that co-teach classrooms should not have a greater concentration of students with more intensive needs simply because there are two teachers in the classroom.

Which student receiving special education services should be placed in an inclusion class?

The location of services for a student receiving special education services should not be determined by the disabling condition or the student's physical capabilities. Each student receiving special education services should be provided services in the LRE, and decisions should be made on an individual basis. Some considerations include:

- Is the learning environment able to support the student's academic needs?
- Can the student maintain attention in the general education classroom?
- Will there be enough opportunities for the student to practice his or her new skills in the general education classroom?
- How will learning be measured and how will data be collected?