**Disability Rights Texas Introduction to the ARD Process / Video #1**

VIDEO AUDIO

DRTx Logo Hello.

**Parent’s Guide to the ARD Process: An Introduction**

**Welcome to the Disability Rights Texas video “Parent’s Guide to the ARD Process: An Introduction.”**

This video was designed to walk parents through the process of obtaining special education services and supports for their children with disabilities.

**Eligibility for Special Education**

IDEA = Individuals with Disabilities Education Act

[image of IDEA manual cover]

Who Is Eligible?

✓ Children ages 3 to 21 ✓ With a disability ✓ Needing specially designed

instruction

The Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA) is a federal law ensuring services to children with disabilities throughout the nation.

IDEA describes early intervention, special education and related services used by more than six-and-a-half million children with disabilities nationwide.

Who is eligible for services under IDEA?

• Children ages 3 to 21

• Who have a disability and

• Who need special instruction designed to meet their unique education needs

**Free Appropriate Public Education**

FAPE = Free Appropriate Public Education

✓ Special Instruction ✓ Qualified Students ✓ Free of Charge

Under IDEA, children with disabilities are entitled to a free appropriate public education, or FAPE.

Schools must provide special instruction — known as special education — free of charge to children who qualify for services.

According to the law, special education must prepare students for further education, employment and independent living.

**In What Is an ARD Committee?**

Texas, the ARD Committee is the group of individuals, including parents and ARD = Admission, Review and Dismissal

guardians, that makes decisions about a student’s special education program.

✓ Determines eligibility ✓ Develops the education plan ✓ Meets at least once a year

In an ARD Committee meeting, the group determines a child’s eligibility for special education services and supports and develops the child’s education plan.

The ARD Committee must meet at least once a year to create or change the student’s special education plan

**Who Is on the ARD Committee?**

✓ Administrator ✓ Regular education teacher ✓ Special education teacher ✓ Parents or guardians ✓ School psychologist ✓ Student, if appropriate ✓ Friend or advocate, if desired

By law, many people are part of the ARD Committee and must attend the ARD Committee meeting, including:

• A school administrator

• A regular instruction teacher

• A special education teacher

• The student’s parents or guardians

• A special education evaluator, such as a school psychologist

• The student, if over age 18, or younger if appropriate

In addition, parents may bring along a friend or advocate for support.

**What Happens in an ARD Committee Meeting?**

✓ Review student test results and

records ✓ Identify student’s unique needs ✓ Determine supports and services

✓ Written consent from parent

The ARD Committee reviews the student’s most recent test results, known as evaluation reports, and records to determine whether that student is eligible for special education services.

If the child is found eligible, then the group identifies the student’s unique education needs and decides on the most appropriate programs and services for that student’s success in school.

If a student needs specially design instruction, parents will be asked to give written consent for the school to provide special education services and supports.

✓ Work together to develop the plan During the ARD Committee meeting, parents and school staff should work together to develop the student’s individual education plan.

**What Is an IEP?**

IEP = Individual Education Plan

✓ Free appropriate education for

the student ✓ Least restrictive environment ✓ Parents or guardians must agree

with the plan

✓ Plan updated at least once a year

The IEP is the student’s individual education plan. It is also the name of the form the ARD Committee completes during the ARD Committee meeting.

The IEP outlines the specific free and appropriate special education services and supports a student will receive in school.

Two important points to remember are:

1. The student must be taught in the

least restrictive environment; AND 2. The student’s parents or guardians

must agree with the education plan.

ARD Committee meetings may be held multiple times during the school year to review the student’s progress, to determine if the IEP needs to be revised, or to address other concerns. Either a parent or the school can ask to have the student’s IEP reviewed and revised at any time.

**Creating the Student’s IEP**

Measurable Goals = Tracking the Student’s Progress

✓ Specific, measurable goals ✓ Participate in regular curriculum ✓ Learn with nondisabled students

The IEP must contain measurable goals in each area of need. This means you must be able to track the student’s progress.

The IEP should list the specific services and supports the school will provide, as well as when and where those services will be provided.

The group will decide what services and supports are needed to:

• Enable the child to meet specific education goals

• Participate in the regular curriculum, including extracurricular activities

• Be educated alongside nondisabled children

In creating the IEP, the group will discuss:

• Supplemental aids and services the student needs to participate in regular education classes and activities, The IEP should contain:

including assistive technology, ✓ Supplemental aids/services

one-on-one assistance and ✓ Dates

modified curriculums. ✓ Times ✓ Frequency ✓ Location ✓ Provider ✓ Assessment and training on

aids and devices

• Specific plans for each service and support, including:

• Date services will begin

• Minutes per session

• Frequency of sessions

• Location of services

• Person providing service

• Assessment and training plan for special aids and devices

[image of an IEP form]

• In addition, the IEP should include a description of any educational or extracurricular activity in which the student will not participate with nondisabled students and why.

✓ Review the IEP form before signing

At the end of the meeting, parents are asked to sign the IEP form, showing they agree with the education plan. Before signing, review the completed IEP form to make sure you understand all the details. You can take the form home and review it before signing, if you want.

Remember: You have the right to help determine how your child will be educated in school.

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1-800-252-9108

www.DisabilityRightsTx.org

Disability Rights Texas would like to thank the Texas Bar Foundation for its generous support and for funding production of this video.

For more information on special education supports and services, call our statewide intake line at 1-800-252-9108 or visit our website at www.DisabilityRightsTx.org.