

## **“The Cavalry Has Arrived”: The Role of ARD Facilitators/Managers in Handling the ARD Process**

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### **What is an ARD committee manager?**

As defined by TEA, an ARD committee manager is a staff member who facilitates or leads ARD committee meetings and helps meet local, state, and federal guidelines for students being considered for or receiving special education and related services. This staff member often acts as a liaison during the ARD committee process between school personnel and a student’s parents or guardians. Other common job titles for this position include ARD Committee Facilitator, ARD Committee Chair, and Child- Centered Process Liaison.

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## **Why are schools using ARD committee managers?**

Schools throughout the state are experiencing shortages of evaluation personnel. There are mandatory deadlines for evaluations that must be met. In order to meet those timelines, schools are using ARD managers to conduct the duties that evaluators have routinely done in order to free up the time of the evaluators to conduct and complete evaluations.

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## **What are the typical job responsibilities of an ARD committee manager?**

- Scheduling and mailing notices for ARD committee meetings
- Making sure the ARD meeting is held by the annual date
- Ensuring that timelines are met
- Communicating with the parent regarding ARD meetings
- Gathering relevant student data, such as, grades, attendance, behavior reports, progress monitoring data, universal screening results, previous and current evaluation reports

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**What are the typical job responsibilities of an ARD committee manager?**

- Drafting deliberations
  - Preparing and finalizing required ARD committee paperwork
  - Facilitating the ARD committee meeting
  - Sending completed Individualized Education Program (IEP) documents to the parents or guardians and archiving in accordance with LEA procedures
  - Scheduling reconvene ARD meetings if the parent disagrees with the IEP
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**What are the typical job responsibilities of an ARD committee manager?**

- Supporting families and school personnel with special education questions
  - Ensuring that classroom teachers receive the IEP paperwork before they begin instruction with a student
  - Complying with requirements established by federal and state law, state board of education (SBOE) rules, local board policies, and special education operating procedures
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**How does an ARD committee manager differ from an IEP facilitator?**

An IEP facilitator is a third party that assists both the school and the parent when the ARD meetings have been contentious.

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**1. The school has already had four ARDs this year and the parent is requesting another one. Does the district have to hold the meeting?**

If a written request for an ARD meeting is made, the school must either have the meeting, or within five school days, provide written notice explaining why the district is declining to have the ARD meeting. Prior Written Notice standards do not apply.

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**2. If the parent cannot participate in person, what does the district need to do?**

The district must offer to allow the parent to participate through other means, such as telephone or video conferencing.

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**3. If a teacher is not attending the ARD meeting, but wants to address the ARD committee members, what is the district required to do?**

A teacher must be allowed to provide written input into the student's IEP.

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**4. The last ARD meeting the school had lasted 6 hours.  
Can the administrator put time limits on an ARD  
meeting?**

Reasonable time limits can be placed on an ARD meeting. If all the issues cannot be addressed during that time, the administrator can continue the meeting or reconvene the ARD meeting at a later date.

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**5. Can the parent insist that all of the child's teachers  
be present at the ARD meeting?**

No. To have all of the teachers present at an ARD meeting would be extremely disruptive to instruction.

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**6. Can the parent insist that the related service personnel be present at the ARD meeting?**

Related service personnel are not required members of the ARD committee. While the parent cannot insist on their attendance, their written input is helpful when the parent is seeking clarification as to the services or progress.

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**7. Can the parent insist that the paraprofessional that has been working with the child attend the ARD meeting?**

No. A paraprofessional is not an instructor of the child. The paraprofessional assists the teacher. The teacher can provide any information regarding the child's instruction.

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**8. Can the administrator bring up new issues at the ARD meeting?**

All issues that are to be addressed at the ARD meeting require the district to give a written five school day notice of the issue to the parent. The only way that a new issue can be discussed is if the parent waives the five day notice.

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**9. The parents are divorced. The father brings someone that the mother does not want at the ARD. Can that individual be asked to leave?**

No. The law allows the parents to bring individuals that have educational relevance to the ARD meeting. The person who brings them makes the determination as to whether the individual has educational relevance.

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**10. The child has been evaluated for a learning disability and the testing shows that the child does not have one. Can the parent and administrator agree to make the child eligible as SLD?**

No. In order to qualify for special education, the child must meet the eligibility criteria. The testing data can be used by the RTI committee to develop strategies to address the child's weaknesses.

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**11. The parent brings an outside assessment to the ARD meeting. Does the ARD committee have to address the outside assessment at that meeting?**

If the ARD committee members have not had the time to adequately review and analyze the outside assessment, the administrator can schedule another ARD meeting to consider the assessment. The ARD committee does not have to address the outside assessment if the members are not prepared to discuss it.

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**12. The parent brings an attorney to the ARD meeting.  
What can the administrator do?**

If the parent brings an attorney to the ARD meeting without informing the school, the administrator can adjourn the meeting and reschedule to have the school's attorney attend.

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**13. The parent wants to video record the ARD meeting.  
Is the parent entitled to do so?**

No. The parent is not entitled to video record the ARD meeting. However, the parent can audio record the meeting. If the parent has chosen to audio record the meeting, the district should also record. Note that the meeting was recorded in the minutes.

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**14. The parent has brought her own agenda to the ARD meeting. Does the administrator have to follow it?**

No. The school should have its own agenda that it passes out at the beginning of the meeting. The administrator needs to inform the parent that the items that she has on her agenda will be addressed at the appropriate time on the school's agenda.

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**15. The ARD meeting has been rescheduled three times at the request of the parent. On the day of the ARD meeting, the parent emails saying that she cannot attend and wants the meeting rescheduled. What should the administrator do?**

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When the meeting has been rescheduled at the parent's request, the last ARD notice should be accompanied with a letter that informs the parent that the ARD will go forward on that date. Since the school has made a concerted effort to have the parent present, the ARD meeting can go forward since it is important to address the child's educational needs. Note the efforts made to have the parent participate in the minutes.

**16. The parent does not want to sign her agreement to the ARD meeting and wants to review it with her husband. Is this allowable?**

Yes. Just give the parent a timeframe to bring the document back signed and noting agreement or disagreement. If the ARD document is not returned within that time, consider it as disagreement and schedule a reconvene ARD meeting.

**17. The parent gets up in the middle of the ARD and states that the meeting is adjourned. What can the administrator do?**

The administrator needs to request that the parent stay, but inform the parent that the meeting will go forward. If the parent leaves, note when the parent left in the minutes and send the parent a copy of the completed IEP.

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**18. The parent disagrees at the ARD meeting. What does the administrator need to do?**

The parent needs to be offered a 10 day recess. It is the parent's prerogative as to whether the ARD committee will reconvene. The parent can waive reconvening. Prior Written Notice needs to be provided.

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**19. The parent insists on having many things placed in the deliberations. Does the school have to include everything?**

The deliberations are only supposed to be a summary. Therefore, if the parent has a multitude of things she wants in the deliberations, let the parent write a statement and attach it to the ARD. That way, it will accurately reflect the parent's concerns.

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**20. The administrator wants the behavior specialist to attend the ARD meeting, but she was not on the ARD notice. Can the behavior specialist attend?**

When seeking to have someone attend the ARD meeting that was not listed on the ARD notice, the administrator needs to ask the parent if she agrees to allow the individual to attend. If the parent agrees, note it in the minutes. If the parent does not agree, the person cannot attend.

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