

Here are some helpful hints and verbiage to use during ARC meetings when students are not making progress on grade level content:

Student Comparisons:

- Instead of saying “low class” or “low group”, say “the student is in a co-teaching setting, where an extra adult is available to assist with instruction”.
- If a student has weaknesses, please describe the weakness as compared to same aged non-disabled peers, not to other students with disabilities. Parents want to know where their child is functioning as compared to same-age peers. Please note that our psychological evaluations use standardized, norm-referenced data.
- Confidentiality is not just for the student the ARC is for, but the other students in the classroom.

Academic Modifications/Specially Designed Instruction:

- Per FAPE/IDEA, all students must have access to and be instructed in the current grade level. This work may then be modified to meet their specially designed instruction. If a teacher uses work below that grade level, please explain this is used as supplement in addition to the grade level work.
- Accommodations are also an ARC decision. If a student is in need of additional accommodations, several factors must be addressed. The ARC will review the most recent psych report, comparative data, observations, and other data points.
- The IEP is to be embedded by all members of the student’s day. The specially designed instruction is the student’s own personal curriculum. It is very important everyone be aware of techniques to use with students with Autism, Mild Mental Disability and other eligibility category.
 - Arrive promptly and have all necessary paperwork, including anything that will need signatures, along with copies for parents ready at start of meeting.
 - Begin with introductions and be sure everyone includes a description of the role they are playing in that meeting.
 - Be conscious of time constraints during meeting. Stay on task in order to begin and end on time.
 - Set an agenda (ie purpose of the meeting, data that will be reviewed, and note any time constraints for individual ARC members).
 - Express appreciation to parent for being involved and participating in the meeting. It is nice to offer the parent a notepad/piece of paper and a pen so they can take notes during the meeting if they so choose.
 - Show respect to the speaker, ARC chair, and/or parents by listening and refraining from starting another conversation. It is difficult to take notes and follow if several conversations are occurring at once.
 - Begin input by being positive about student before identifying issues...end on a positive as well.

- Solicit parental input to make them feel like an integral part of the process
- Share celebrations of student performance
- Maintain student centered conversation and avoid talking off task
- Be mindful of confidentiality. Do not address other student needs during meeting.
- Demonstrate through body language, an interest in what parents/colleagues are saying by maintaining eye contact and looking attentive
- Use jargon free language. (Or take time to define specific acronyms and/or terminology)
- Avoid any behaviors that indicate you are defensive
- Do not make excuses or refer to not meeting one child's need(s) because of another child
- Avoid communicating frustration to parents in a negative manner
- Avoid complaining about your responsibilities in front of a parent during an ARC meeting (i.e. no planning, too many meetings, too many kids on your caseload, etc.)
- Avoid blaming other colleagues for things that are your responsibility

Placement Decisions:

- When determining a student's Least Restrictive Environment, it is important to remember this is an ARC discussion. Rather than starting with saying, "the student needs 1:1 instruction," describe the student's performance in the classroom setting, and the ARC can then discuss the _____.

ARC Etiquette:

- Finally, it is important to always give verbal praise of the student's strengths, and the strengths of the parent. We all know some parents are not the best, but some parents are doing the best they can.