

THE IDEAL IEP COMMITTEE MEETING

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- I. Four Key Challenges at Every Meeting
 - A. assure that members accomplish the goals of the particular ARD meeting
 - B. budget the available time so as to maintain progress towards goals
 - C. defuse intensity of emotion which might interfere with goal achievement
 - D. safeguard a collaborative decision-making process

- II. Characteristics of the Ideal ARD Committee Meeting
 - A. pre-conferencing occurs to assure adequate preparation by all participants
 - B. pre-conferencing with parents occurs when difficult issues are anticipated
 - C. evaluation results are reviewed in advance, especially if they contain bad news
 - D. child care has been arranged in advance
 - E. chairperson meets informally with parents before the formal meeting begins (to welcome, answer questions, cover procedural safeguards, etc.)
 - F. all participants are introduced to each other
 - G. a written agenda is visible to all and supported by an invitation to make additions and to agree whether this is a reasonable plan for the day
 - H. round table seating in a comfortable setting, free from noise and distractions
 - I. refreshments are provided to promote comfort and a welcoming atmosphere
 - J. each member is time conscious
 - K. chairperson budgets the available time and politely redirects participants who wander
 - L. guidelines (rules) are agreed (re. civility, interrupting, leaving, phones, etc.)
 - M. an atmosphere of mutual respect exists
 - N. participants share in and contribute to a common purpose: serving the child
 - O. breaks are taken as needed, every hour or so
 - P. the meeting has a clear purpose, and roles and responsibilities are clear for tasks occurring before, during, and after the meeting
 - Q. the outcome of the meeting is restated at the end for clarity and any necessary correction
 - R. a written “parking lot” is established for issues to be addressed at a later date (rather than letting them get lost)
 - S. an “open door” exists for airing and sharing between meetings
 - T. a brief assessment (verbal and/or written) is done regarding how the meeting went and how future meetings might be improved
 - U. the meeting ends on a positive note, and participants are thanked for their time and contributions