

SCHOOL ATTENDANCE SUPPORT MEETING (SART equivalent) TEMPLATE

By: Amir Alavi, Esq., Director of Chronic Absenteeism Reduction, Riverside County Office of Education

GENERAL OVERVIEW OF MEETING:

- To Qualify for a SART meeting:
 - Have letters been sent?
 - Has the teacher/site attempted check-ins?
- At the SART MEETING (suggested chronology):
 - **Introductions** – Connection before Content
 - **Overview** of meeting / agenda
 - State **purpose** of SART Meeting
 - Explore **reason** for SART Meeting, i.e. numbers, history
 - **Discussion** – giving parents/guardians & student full opportunity to share and explain challenges
 - **Provide resources** to match each issue
 - **Conclusion** and discussion of follow up measures

EACH COMPONENT EXPANDED:

ROOM SET-UP / SETTING

- Please try to arrange the seating in a circle to create a sense of connection and community vs. hierarchy or authority. Please try and make the environment as inviting as possible. Please consider providing refreshments or snacks to create a sense of comfort and nourishment. Please consider having some pamphlets or helpful resource references available to share with families.

INTRODUCTIONS:

- Each person should introduce themselves, their role/position, including parents & student(s).
- Connection before Content: please try to personalize the meeting by asking about the students and their interests and thanking the parents for their time, and engaging the family before jumping into content, attendance stats, or grades.
- Give an overview of the meeting chronology:
 - i.e. “we want to share with you the purpose of the meeting, discuss your child’s participation / attendance, explore any barriers to participation, review all the available resources and supports to assist you, and briefly discuss steps to follow up with you.”
- TONE: The tone of these meetings should be informal, friendly, collaborative, and non-punitive.

PURPOSE of the SART MEETING:

- Please use phrases like: “to form a partnership and to work as a team to improve distance learning participation / attendance for (student names)”.

REASON for the SART MEETING:

- A member of the school site staff would briefly review the numbers, participation, or attendance for the student.

DISCUSSION:

- The SART staff would ask the parents and student to share any challenges, barriers, or obstacles to consistent participation/good attendance.

- The team would want to *identify each reason/barrier* to get a better picture – often times the family will face numerous challenges.

SUPPORTS & SERVICES:

- The SART staff should review all available and applicable resources and supports to assist the family and generously offer each relevant service, support, or intervention.
 - Please consider offering general supports to each student, i.e. counseling, tutoring, internet connection/device assistance etc.
 - Please consider offering more specific supports tailored to that student's individual needs in addition to the general supports above (i.e. a bus pass for a high school student)
- The SART staff may use a contract, if possible, that clearly lists the supports the team offered and some terms spelling out expectations for the parent and students.

FOLLOW UP:

- The SART staff will briefly explain efforts they will make to follow up with the family and to support the family.
- The SART staff will then follow up over time.

CONCLUSION of the MEETING:

- The SART should ask parents and students if there are any additional questions. A key concept to communicate is that a parent's role in this process is critical and that the SART staff will partner with the family to ensure student success.
- The SART staff will provide any links, resources, handouts, referral numbers etc. at the conclusion of the meeting.